GLIMPSES
of
ANCIENT HACKNEY
and
STOKE NEWINGTON

BENJAMIN CLARKE

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GLIMPSES OF ANCIENT HACKNEY AND STOKE NEWINGTON

BENJAMIN CLARKE

Edited with a new Introduction by DAVID MANDER

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FOREWORD

Glimpses of Ancient Hackney and Stoke Newington is the first of a very welcome new publications programme which is to be undertaken by the Hackney Archives Department. This book reflects Hackney's past, a subject covered by too few books currently in print. Future publications will go on to reflect both other aspects of our past, and also aspects of our present, as reflected in the writings of the many varied people who go to make up the present-day Borough of Hackney.

Hackney Archives is an important part of our service to local people. It deals not just with 'Ancient Hackney' – fascinating as that is – but comes right up to the present day, playing a vital role in ensuring that the decisions that are made now are preserved for the future.

I hope that readers will enjoy wandering the streets of nineteenth century Hackney with Benjamin Clarke, and will feel drawn by what they have read to visit our Archives and see what other treasures they hold.

Felicity Harvest
Chair, Leisure Services Committee
October 1986

INTRODUCTION

It is some ninety-five years since the first of Benjamin Clarke's newspaper articles on Hackney's past first appeared in the *Hackney Mercury*. They proved so popular that they were collected together and appeared in book form in 1894, and since then have been well thumbed through by many generations of students. While Clarke's work is not a history of the area – for the only published work remains that of William Robinson, whose two volume history appeared in 1842-43 – it is one of the most valuable sources for the study of Hackney's past. Despite some errors in the original articles it remains essential reading for anyone interested in the changes that have affected the area covered by the old metropolitan borough of Hackney. Copies in private hands are treasured possessions and in reprinting the work it is hoped that Clarke will become more accessible to a new generation of local researchers and residents who would like to know more about the Hackney that preceded the Victorian developers.

It was not Clarke's intention to write a history. Rather, as he said in one of the earlier columns in the *Mercury*:

> I am toiling away "lonesome leisure hours" thus renewing old memories and in spirit perambulating streets and lanes, gardens and fields, the aspects of which have so completely altered in the last fifty years, that were our old fellow parishioners, who have in that period past away from among us, once again to visit their old resorts they would prove as ignorant of the several localities as the places are of them, and my intent is to follow the leading of the almost immortal Pepys, and his more staid compeer Evelyn, in introducing here and there little bits of anecdote or even gossip (if readers like it) having reference to the several houses and localities mentioned . . .[1]

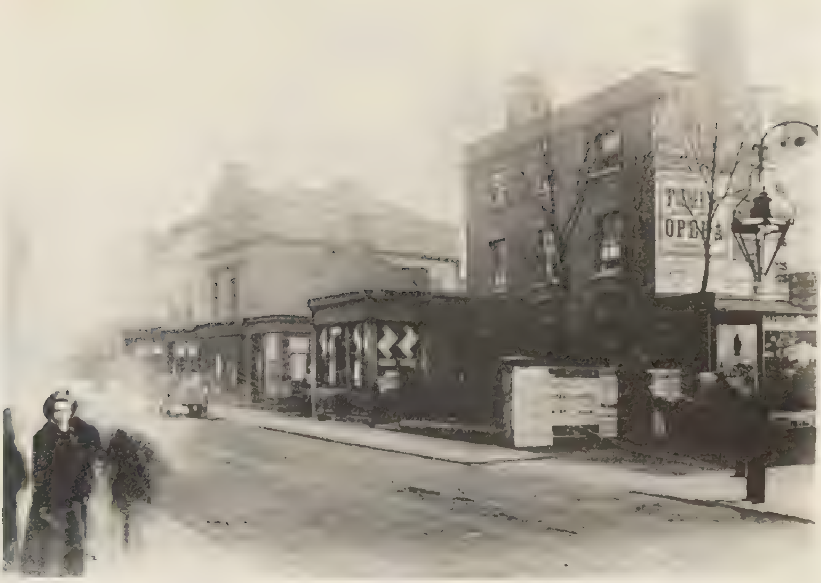
This in broad measure Clarke did. He took a series of imaginary walks through the streets of the 1890s, reconstructing what had been there forty or fifty years, or even earlier before. He consulted some written sources, including Robinson's history, but in the main he relied on his own memories and those of his contemporaries or immediate predecessors. The articles were written under a pseudonym, but there are many personal touches in the work and it was soon an open secret in Hackney as to who the author was. Clarke, though not his book, has been curiously neglected by local researchers and previous library and archive department staff alike, and so some short biographical notes may help place his book in context. In the course of my investigations I was surprised to discover that I had, unaware, been a regular attender at one of his former surgeries. That odd link helped in some way to bring me closer to the man, and the world he inhabited.

Benjamin Clarke was born in 1821, the eldest son of Benjamin and Catherine Clarke. The Clarke family originated from Waddington, Lincolnshire and the first of the family to come to London was George Clarke, who by 1654 was a mercer of Cheapside with a house in Mare Street, Hackney, where he lived until his death in 1658. A nephew, Sir Edward Clarke, was Lord Mayor of London in 1617, but after George's death the family link with Hackney was broken until the early 19th century.[2]

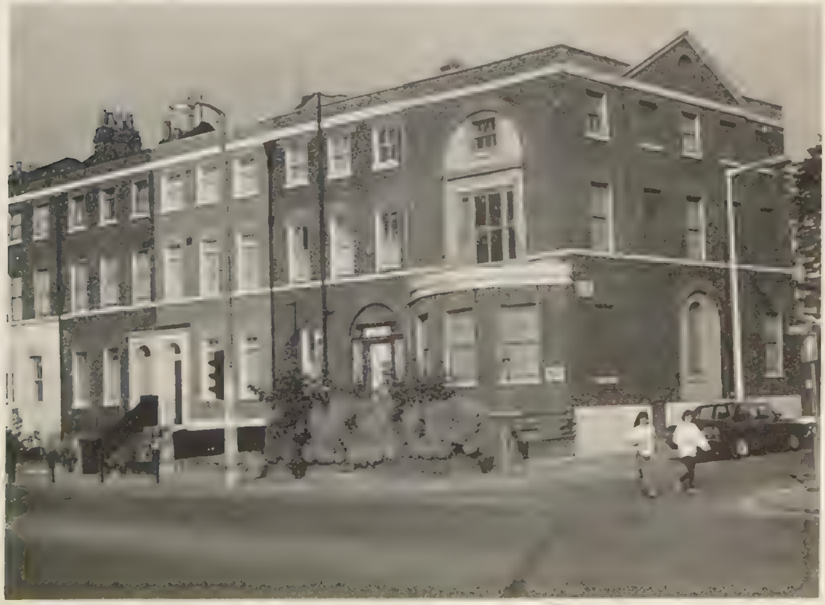
Benjamin Clarke Senior came to Hackney in 1819[3] when he bought an already established chemist's business on Mare Street just to the north of Pemberton Place. In 1800 this had been a stationer's shop but in 1815 the second chemist's shop in Hackney had been founded there.[4] The photograph shows the house, No.172 Mare Street, as it appeared about 1900 when used as a restaurant and undoubtedly the projecting shop area would have been the place where the chemist's customers would have been received. In Clarke's childhood there was a long garden behind the house but this had already been truncated for building by 1900. The house was demolished about 1908[5] and its site is now part of Cordwainers' College.

Clarke gives little away about his early home life, though from the Census Returns of 1841 we know he was the eldest of three children. However, in *Glimpses* he recalls a frightening evening during the celebrations that followed the passing of the Reform Act of 1832, when the franchise was extended. Clarke would have been about eleven at the time and recalled the local jubilation:

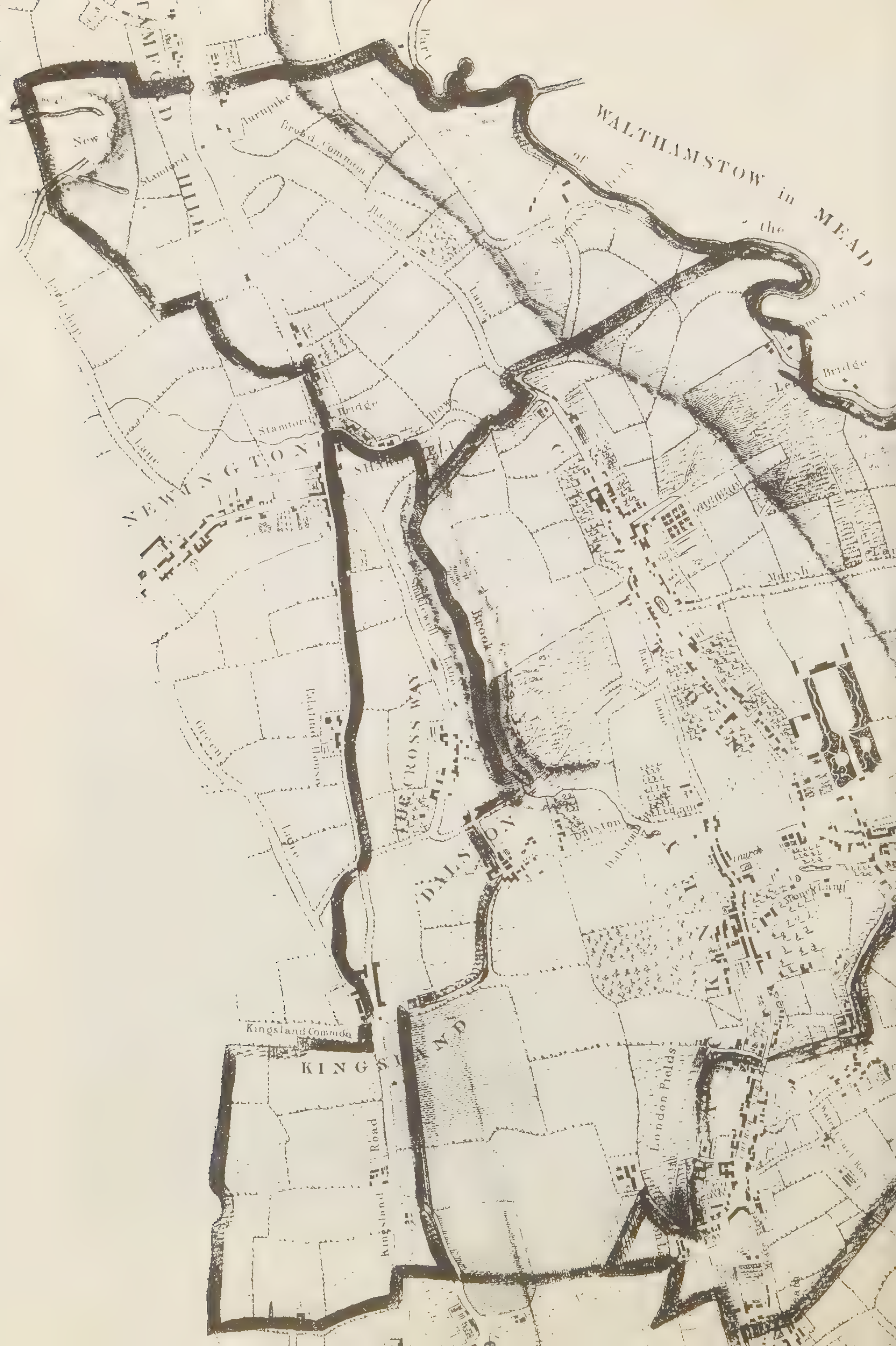
> The old Tory Wilson opposite [in the house now the Lansdowne Club], and the no less Tory chemist opposite, entertaining other views, would have closed their shutters in mourning, but it would not do. A rabble rout, coercive as Radicals are even now towards all who think fit to differ from them, paraded the streets, and would have smashed the windows if they had failed to give the then popular sign. However, in each case farthing rush-lights saved their windows, but it was an awfully anxious night.[5]



Benjamin Clarke's birthplace, No 172 Mare Street. By the time this view was taken in about 1900, it was in use as a restaurant. The entrance to Pemberton Place is in the left foreground. Lady Holles School, now part of Cordwainers' College can be seen in the background.



Nos 224-228 Mare Street, the former Spackman's Buildings. Clarke's house and surgery is the present no 224, the bow fronted house on the corner.

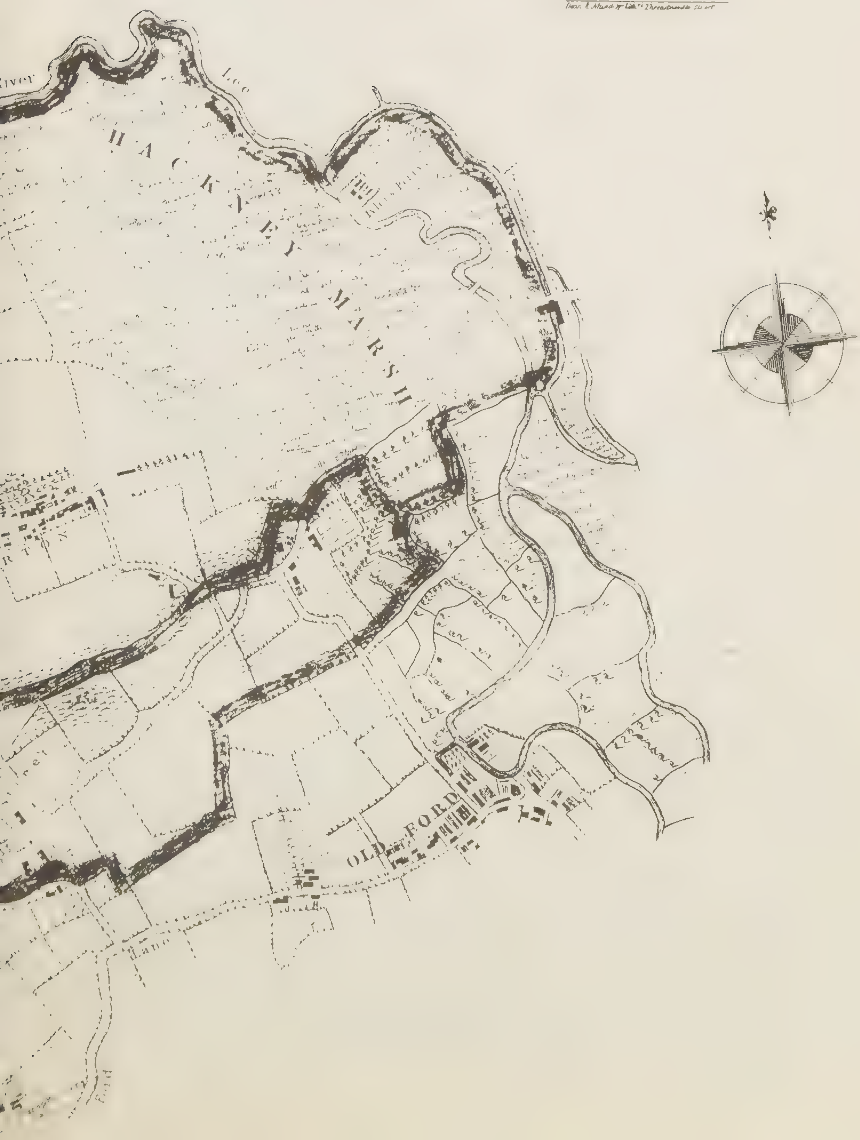

STAMFORD HILL
Turnpike
Broad Common
New
Stamford
Park
WALTHAMSTOW in MEAD
of
the
Bridge
Lea Bridge
Stamford Bridge
Lane
NEWINGTON
SHACKLEWELL
Marsh
Brook
CROSS WAY
Green
Lane
DALSTON
Dalston
Dalston Lane
Church
Kingsland Common
KINGSLAND
Kingsland Road
London Fields

MAP OF THE

PARISH OF HACKNEY,

SURVEYED BY JOHN ROCQUE, 1745.

Dean & Munday Lith.rs Threadneedle Street



River Lea
HACKNEY MARSH
RTON
OLD FORD
Lane

Benjamin's father kept his windows and survived well into the 1850s. By 1855 the business was in the hands of his younger son Henry and remained a family business into the early 1880s.[6]

The young Benjamin's first school was Mrs Todd's, in what was then Grove Street (now Lauriston Road) behind the Albion Public House. Clarke recalls a mulberry tree in the garden, which was still there in the 1890s, though by that time the schoolhouse formed part of a small brewery.[8] Later he attended the Hackney Church of England Grammar School in Clarence Place. His father had been one of the founder trustees in 1830.[9] There was an alternative school, the Proprietary Grammar School which had been founded earlier in the same year at the north east end of Sutton Place. Those wishing to send their sons there had to purchase three £15 shares, and might have to put up an additional £5 per share. This was no obstacle to the more prosperous members of the community, but the rules barred anyone who kept a shop in Hackney from becoming a proprietor. Clarke quotes an indignant tradesman's reaction:

> So the son of a Hackney shopkeeper, who may be doing thousands a year, and employing so many hands that he need not soil his fingers, and probably pays a rental of £200 per year, is not fit company or a suitable associate for the son of a man who lives in an eight-roomed house, paying £20 yearly rental, and himself serving pennyworths of oil in his own shop, not three miles distant from Hackney.[10]

The result of a public meeting of like minded men was the formation of the Church of England school. Inevitably there was friction between the two schools, which was not resolved until rivalry with the Hackney Charity School brought the boys together:

> . . . and the two schools, in the face of a common enemy, at once became friends (and ever after remained so). Our field of Waterloo was the Hackney Churchyard and, as the "charity brats" (the name then given them) poured in from Chatham-place along the Churchwell-path to intercept the Grammar School boys as they came out of school in the afternoon, we, from Clarence-road, in equally "imposing columns" rushed down Clapton-square, took the path, now by the Coroners Court, along the Rectory Garden-wall, and outflanked the Charity boys. There really was some military genius shown on the part of our leaders. The fight became fast and furious, stones and other missiles were freely used, as well as heavy book straps. In the midst of the combat the police made their appearance, and by dropping on the ringleaders (for the Charity boys were the aggressors) the riot was with great difficulty quelled, even without a magistrate to read the Riot Act, or calling out the military to empty their shot belts or give a bayonet charge. So ended the battle of Hackney . . .[11]

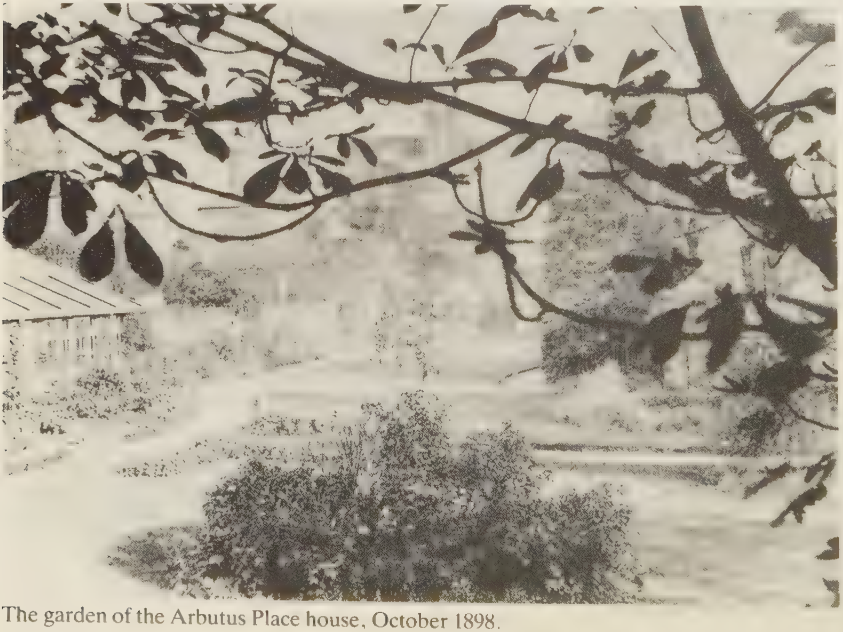
Clarke is altogether more reticent on what the school managed to teach him, but he evidently benefited from his father's links with medicine, for he went on to train as a doctor at the London Hospital. He became a member of the Royal College of Surgeons in July 1842, and a fellow in November 1859. From this arose his later *nom de plume* 'F.R.C.S.'[12] By 1847 he had established himself in a practice at No 4 Spackman's Buildings, the terrace on the east side of Mare Street between Darnley and Paragon Roads, renamed Richmond Terrace in the 1850s, and now Nos 224-228 Mare Street. On the strength of his new income Clarke married in 1846 and by 1851 his wife Charlotte, (possibly one of the Hensley family), had borne him two daughters, Elizabeth Hensley (b.1847) and Charlotte Emily (b.1848).[13] Presumably the practice flourished, for when the larger bow-fronted house at the end of the terrace became vacant in 1850, Clarke took the property and moved his family three doors down the road.

Spackman's Buildings are still standing, though the large gardens of No 1 have gone. The bow-fronted house had probably been the home of the builder of the terrace, Joseph Spackman, hence its larger size. Clarke stayed for thirteen years, and for many years a large copper beech tree in the front garden commemorated his occupancy.[14] After his departure the house continued its medical associations, and has only recently ceased to be a surgery. It was in the dining room of this house that Tyer's system of railway signalling was first demonstrated, presumably to Clarke and a gathering of the scientifically curious of the parish.[15]

It was during his time at Richmond Terrace that Clarke was appointed Surgeon to the Homerton District of the Hackney Poor Law Union, later becoming Surgeon to the East London Union Infirmary. He was also involved in the volunteer militia movement that sprang up all over the country in the later 1850s in response to fears of a French invasion and became Assistant Surgeon, and later became Depot Surgeon to the King's Own Light Infantry, Tower Hamlets Militia, who met in the Assembly Rooms on the west side of the Narrow Way, Mare Street.

Just when Clarke's antiquarian interests began is impossible to say. As a boy he had fished on the Lea and roamed the fields and common lands of what was still almost a country parish. During his early working life he saw much of Hackney developed for building which swept away the remaining farms and removed many of the old houses of his childhood. In common with most of his contemporaries, Clarke had little liking for Georgian architecture, but he was well aware of the losses in the local architectural heritage caused by the 19th century development. By 1868

No 1 Arbutus Place, a photograph taken in June 1892. Ickburgh Road has already been built through part of Clarke's grounds by the time.



The garden of the Arbutus Place house, October 1898.

he was already a member of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, for when a Roman marble tomb was found in Lower Clapton he presented a paper to the Society on the discovery,[16] and his wider interest in Hackney's past in general must have been well established by this time.

By the 1860s Mare Street had become noisier and busier. Clarke's near neighbour, Loddiges Nursery, had been sold for building and the construction of Darnley Road deprived him of part of his garden. This prompted him to move in 1863 to No 1 Arbutus Place, a large Georgian house in Upper Clapton at the present junction with Ickburgh Road. Here he continued his medical practice and wrote both his only recorded medical article[17] and the pieces for the *Hackney Mercury* that later became *Glimpses of Ancient Hackney and Stoke Newington*.

Clarke had left Mare Street when building development affected his house and garden. Upper Clapton too was changing, and during his time at Arbutus Place the railway cut through just to the south of the house and a station opened across the road. Hackney was changing from a collection of village settlements to a suburb and was soon to become a part of Inner London. Many times in *Glimpses* Clarke bewails the passing of old families as their descendants leave the district, but a mere six years after *Glimpses* first appeared Clarke also left Hackney. He and his daughter Charlotte moved to No 1 Crowther Terrace, Bournemouth where he worked as a Medical Examiner for Life Insurance G.P.O. His last house was St. Lawrence in Crescent Road, Bournemouth.[18]

Clarke's departure from Hackney was noted by the 'Our Local Lounger' column of the *Hackney Gazette* on 3 October 1898. Inevitably the newspaper was not quite correct in all its facts and Clarke wrote to the Gazette on 12 October recalling his birth in Mare Street and his time at Richmond Terrace:

> The bow fronted house at the corner of Darnley road was my last residence there. I took it when it had a spacious wing standing where Darnley road now stands. This road was cut through my orchard and Loddiges gardens, which for the earlier years of my practice were in full existence and from which some of the finest palm [misprinted "plum" in the text] trees were removed to Crystal Palace . . . Many a plant in Chatsworth came from there. A striking memento of my residence in Richmond Terrace is a copper beech tree in the front, planted by me some 36 years ago, which had retained its full health and vigour, and yet has never grown any larger. I trust my successors will respect that vegetable wonder. It was from that house that I removed to Upper Clapton some 35 years ago, to be subjected to a similar lopping or curtailment, for Ickburgh road was in like manner cut through my premises in the front and reduced their length at the back. I now only await Time's inevitable scythe on my own person.[19]

Benjamin Clarke died in Bournemouth on 3 November 1906. A short obituary appeared in the *Hackney Mercury* a week later, recalling that Clarke had regularly returned to Hackney see old haunts and friends. 'Dr Clarke's homely manner and his fund of local information made him not only a most interesting but [also a] desirable companion and accordingly he was very popular'. Clarke was buried in Highgate Cemetery.[20]

This then was the man. Clarke was not alone in his concern about recording the past, nor the first to write about it for a local paper. In 1867 a series called 'Our Local Sketches' appeared in the *Hackney Gazette* on the same themes, though also including Shoreditch and Bethnal Green, with a lengthy tour round Abney Park Cemetery. The articles rely rather more on literary quotations than Clarke did and the author was more careful to hide his identity and has not been traced as yet, but the series was obviously welcomed by Gazette readers, and it appeared again with revisions in 1875, and was further reprinted in 1898-99. Being slightly earlier, and by an author older than Clarke, 'Our Local Sketches' proved a useful source for dating some matters Clarke is a little vague on, and in two instances helped to clarify points that Clarke had not wished to be precise about. However the earlier work was not destined to reach book form. One copy of the articles, now in the Hackney Archives Department local collection, has had some illustrations added, recognising the lack of visual material that both texts suffered from. It was not only posterity that complained about this problem, for when the *Hackney Mercury* first announced in January 1894 that *Glimpses* was to be published, it added 'in reply to many enquiries we may add that it is not intended that the work should be illustrated'. In the event the work only included a photograph of the author as its frontispiece, which is a pity, for Clarke was well aware of the importance of the visual as well as the written record. When describing the old Plough public house in Homerton for example he exclaims:

> Would some enterprising photographer turn his camera on the Plough Public House, take a careful view of its front in High Street, then perhaps some smart limner would carry that gable front, ruled by the width of the present separate tenements, to John-street, and this most interesting old building would be reconstructed.[21]

Fortunately several photographers, including the very enterprising Alfred Braddock had already done so. Although he used the Tyssen Library, Clarke seems to have been unaware of the wealth of pencil sketches and watercolours of subjects he describes, though in some he did see and noted in the text. Finally Clarke's own copy of Robinson's History of Hackney (in private hands) has been grangerized with additional photographs, some of which Clarke may have specially commissioned. Perhaps it was the printing costs of an illustrated history that prevented him from bowing to public demand.

For the book cost more to produce than the author anticipated. It was originally priced to subscribers at 3s 6d per copy and by the end of March 1894 almost seventy people had subscribed. Thereafter regular notices in the *Hackney Mercury* proclaimed that the work was soon to be published, but it was not until 14 July that Clarke was able to announce that it 'was with the binders'. The addition of the Stoke Newington articles and the appendix on Hackney Churchyard had increased the cost, and Clarke met the loss on the subscribed copies from his own pocket, but the price to the public now rose to 5s. A few copies were to be specially bound, presumably at an additional cost. *Glimpses* was finally released on 28 July 1894.

It is evident from the work as published that the processes of preparation for publication were rushed. This shows most of all in the contents page of the original edition, which collated the original newspaper articles into chapters but have no pagination for the new book. Clarke's corrections were incorporated as they had originally appeared, though some additional footnotes were added. The decision to include the appendix on Hackney Churchyard gave a topical air to the work, as the debate on the conversion to an open space had occupied the columns of the local papers in the latter part of 1893. As stated the book was not illustrated, nor were any maps included, although Clarke mentions them in his text.

Glimpses with all its faults was a popular book, and in default of later histories of Hackney it has remained a classic work of reference since its publication. Copies in the local collection at Mare Street Library were in constant use, and in 1938 L M Ranscombe compiled an index for use by library users. With slight revisions this has been incorporated into the present edition.

For the original work Clarke relied on the work of Robinson, on an unpublished history compiled by John Thomas, another local doctor, in 1832, and on his own memories and surmises. Since his time far more source material has been collected by the Hackney Archives Department and its precursors, and additional research carried out. To have reprinted *Glimpses* as it stood would have been to perpetuate a number of understandable errors and one or two myths that have not stood the test of time. Accordingly new footnotes add additional information, and help the reader to locate some of the buildings that were there when Clarke was writing but which have since disappeared. While the primary concern of the footnotes is topographical some biographical material has been included, however the constraints of simultaneously running a public service and researching made it impossible to include biographical entries for all the people Clarke mentions. Those who feel the lack will be most welcome at the Hackney Archive Department to carry out further research. It has also not been possible to include the new footnotes in the index, but the footnotes contain cross references to the text and it is hoped that no reader will have to conduct a lengthy search.

The lack of illustrations in the original edition has also been remedied. Clarke ranges back in his book to the eighteenth century and beyond, in some cases writing with engravings that appeared in Robinson's history in mind. Accordingly the new edition includes a mixture of prints, drawings and photographs, grouped in the order in which they appear in the text. Two photograph albums with past views of the area have already been published, and Hackney Council will shortly publish a selection of photographs taken before 1914, which is intended in part to supplement the new edition of *Glimpses*.

A map was also vital. The most detailed maps of the area are the 25 inch to 1 mile Ordnance Survey series, which were first issued for the Hackney area in 1868, with a new edition appearing from 1892 onwards. Although these were extensively used by contemporary local authorities and surveyors, they did not have the popularity of today's Ordnance Survey maps, being issued only as large flat sheets rather than in folded editions. Clarke makes no reference to them, but both series were invaluable in preparing this new edition. Recently a private publisher, Alan Godfrey, has issued folded sheet reproductions at two thirds the size of the originals. Close co-operation between Alan and Hackney Archives Department has ensured that the Hackney area is now well covered by Godfrey maps and being able to take these home to work greatly assisted the present editor's task!

Clarke made great use of two maps, the Survey of London by John Rocque of 1745, and the Hackney Parish map of 1832. The latter is a detailed and very accurate survey of the parish, but its very detail makes reduction of size impossible, as was found when it was reprinted by Hackney Council in 1985. Accordingly for the new edition of *Glimpses* the Hackney part of Rocque's Survey has been reproduced. This is rather sketchy, but Clarke makes several direct references to it. The chosen sheet has the division of the old parish of Hackney marked on it, whereby in 1825 the parishes of South and West Hackney and St Thomas' Clapton Common were created out of the old parish of St John at Hackney. It may help readers place some long vanished buildings or follow Clarke in some of his surmises about buildings that had long gone from recall even in the 1890s.

Glimpses is firmly based in the Hackney of the end of the nineteenth century. Not only have many of the buildings of the time vanished, but street names have been changed, a process both Clarke and the author of 'Our Local Sketches' complain loudly about. Redevelopment schemes of the twentieth century have removed other roads entirely. So a concordance of old and new street names has been provided and this incorporates brief notes on those streets that have gone without trace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have helped in the preparation of this new edition. In particular I would like to thank our co-publishers the Hackney Society, and especially the Secretary, Patrick Hammill. Thanks are also due to Eileen Mortimer, Julia Sheppard of the Contemporary Medical Archives Centre, the staff of the Library of the Royal College of Surgeons, and Jean Wait and Jon Newman of Hackney Archives Department, all of whom helped in the research; Sandy Louis, who typed and typeset the index, footnotes and street list; Claire Harrington, who corrected my lapses of grammar and punctuation and who assisted in proof reading; and to Stephen and Tina Schwarz and the staff of Expression Printers who advised on production and design of the book. Any sins of omission or commission are my responsibility, but I hope that the long hours taken up following Clarke down the highways and byways of a vanished era has been time well spent.

David Mander
Archivist, London Borough of Hackney

South Hackney
September 1986

Abbreviations used by editor in this book.

G.L.R.O.	Greater London Record Office
H.A.D.	Hackney Archives Department
L.A.M.A.S.	London and Middlesex Archaeological Society
V.C.H.	Victoria County History
B.M.J.	British Medical Journal

FOOTNOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1 *Glimpses*, p.29.

2 *Glimpses*, pp.77-79; Census Returns, 1841. Plarr in his *Lives of the Fellows of the Royal College of Surgeons* (1930) claims that Clarke's father was a surgeon dentist practising at Brooke Street, Grosvenor Square. While there were 'Clarks' at various addresses in that road in the 1830s there is no evidence that any of them were related to the author and there is no other support for Plarr's assertion.

3 *Glimpses*, p.79.

4 Ibid, p.27.

5 From listings in Kellys directories of Hackney, Homerton etc. It is likely that Saxony Cottages were cleared at the same time.

6 *Glimpses*, p.28.

7 From listings in local directories.

8 *Glimpses*, p.172.

9 H.A.D. M45.

10 *Glimpses*, p.133.

11 Ibid, p.134.

12 Plarr, op cit, p.237.

13 Local directories. Census Returns, 1851.

14 Letter from Clarke to the *Hackney Gazette*, 12 October 1898.

15 *Glimpses*, p.45.

16 'On a Roman Sarcophogus of white marble discovered at Lower Clapton' Tr. LAMAS 13 January 1868, iii, p.191ff.

17 'Knots in the umbilical cord' B.M.J., 1883, i, p.860. Cited by Plarr, op cit, p.238.

18 Plarr, p.237.

19 Letter to *Gazette*, op cit.

20 *Hackney Mercury*, 10 November 1906.

21 *Glimpses*, p.144.

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J. R. C.

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GLIMPSES OF ANCIENT HACKNEY AND STOKE NEWINGTON.

BEING A REPRINT OF A SERIES OF ARTICLES APPEARING IN THE *HACKNEY MERCURY*, FROM APRIL 23rd, 1892, TO NOVEMBER 25th, 1893.

With an Appendix Dealing with the Conversion of a Portion of Hackney Churchyard into an Open Space.

BY

F.R.C.S.

Dedicated by Permission to LORD AMHERST
of Hackney.

LONDON:
A. T. Roberts, Son & Co., *Hackney Mercury* Offices, The Grove,
Hackney, and 5, Hackney Road, Shoreditch.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE THE LORD AMHERST
OF HACKNEY.

Dear Lord Amherst,

To no other than yourself, as Lord of the Manor, would I dedicate these "Glimpses of Ancient Hackney," and its adjoining Village, Stoke Newington, and it affords me much pleasure to note that I have your ready acquiescence, with the assurance of your deep interest in all that concerns our Old Township. I subscribe myself as

Yours faithfully,
F.R.C.S. (the Author),

Upper Clapton,
Christmas, 1893.

PREFACE.

I presume it is but right, in accordance with the general custom, to introduce this attempt at literary work with a preface, if only to give my reasons for sending forth such a *brochure*, first, among my own fellow parishioners, especially those native born, and secondly (as it now appears from promised subscribers still farther away), to Hackney families, who may have a lingering regard for the old spot in their new homes in our distant Colonies. If, as has been asserted, the good old British word "Home" has no place in any other language, and is even difficult to render with due emphasis in a foreign tongue, how intensely must the ring of that word, and of that unrivalled sentence, "Home, sweet Home," sound to our brethren, now Colonists in foreign lands, especially to those, who, in the Antipodes, can enjoy no "Yule Log" upon the Christmas fire, nor join in the mazy dance, and exciting frolics of a mid-winter season, beneath an almost tropical sun in the height of their summer. Thank God! among my fellow Countrymen altered conditions of climate and country, do not alter the sturdy Britisher's notion of Home. So my motto shall be in that style.

It may be asked why I have spent hour after hour in the midst of my busy and uncertain calling, in thus holding up pictures of the past in my native Village? Circumstances, which I care not to detail here, have made the quiet of my own dwelling, and the seclusion of my study, far more congenial to my feelings during the last three years, than the excitement of either political or social engagements in the outside world; and as in the solitude of the closet fancy could best depict memories of the scenes long gone by, never to return, so the description of many a place in their neighbourhood, now altered beyond recognition, has proved a not ungracious task.

Trusting my readers will make due allowance for these efforts of an unaccustomed literary scribe, I leave the same unreservedly to their favourable criticism as their humble Servant,

F.R.C.S.

Glimpses of Ancient Hackney.

CHAPTER I.

Papers I. II. III.

MAY I crave pardon of your readers for the many imperfections of sundry notes, now to be brought into form, which have given me, perhaps, more pleasure to write, than your subscribers to read. And where shall we begin? "It is a far cry to Loch Awe"—it is farther still to Tyre and Sidon, the latter city called after Sidon, the son of Canaan, and built (it is said) about B.C. 2267, only a few centuries after the Flood. In these two maritime cities arose the first navigators of the sea in ships—the Phœnicians, whose naval and commercial prosperity was at its height between B.C. 1600 and B.C. 500. Their vessels crept along the shores of the Mediterranean until the Pillars of Hercules (now the Straits of Gibraltar) were reached, and from thence, with a boldness still characteristic of our own hardy sailors, the Bay of Biscay was crossed, the English Channel opened out to them, and Britain discovered about B.C. 1500.

Such may be gathered from the works, legendary and historical, of various ancient writers, whose veracity may be depended upon in certain leading statements in which all appear agreed. Moses speaks of tin and lead being found among the spoils of the Midianites, B.C. 1450, and Homer names their presence in the Trojan War, B.C. 1184, and Pliny tells us the best qualities and the most abundant were found in the British Isles. Have any of your readers visited the South Kensington Museum and stood in admiration over that funeral vase, containing the remains of some royal infant, enclosed in delicate filagree work or tissue of the finest gold, and found deep down in the ruins of ancient Troy? Possibly we have looked upon the ashes of one who might, had he or she lived, have been one of our ancestors; for legend and history alike agree that somewhere about the time of the Trojan War, B.C. 1184, and during the time of the Judges in Israel, certain Trojans, headed by Æneas, escaped to the continent, and founded Rome and sundry other places on the Mediterranean. Geoffry of Monmouth, quoting from old traditions, tells us that subsequently a Trojan chief named Brutus, a great grandson of Æneas, accidentally killed his father while hunting in an Italian forest. Obliged to leave the country, he went to Greece. There, meeting with fellow-countrymen, descendants of Trojans who had been carried captive to Greece, he offered to put himself at their head, and, through Phœnician traders, led them by sea to Britain.

Here they founded several settlements, and, passing across South Britain eastward, reached a spot suitable alike for a city and a port. From the sea upwards was the Thames, far wider than now, running in its unembanked, unbridged channel, and where our great city now stands were hills clothed with mighty forests, surrounded, except on the north side, by extensive lake-like waters stretching over what is now Lambeth, Kennington, Camberwell, and Southwark to the foot of the Surrey hills, bounded on the east by the River Lea, then at least a mile wide, and on the west by the Brent, and hill streams still marked by what was the Fleet Ditch, and also the Serpentine in Hyde Park. What better site for security could be chosen? and, as if to verify the fact of the Mother Country of the strangers, they built their town or city and called it "New Troy," subsequently named "Trinovant," and afterwards, because it was a town on a lake, it is called by Tacitus "Llin-din" (*Lin* lake, *Din* town), and by its Roman conquerors "Londinium" (London). On the 26th of August, B.C. 55, Julius Cæsar, who had heard much of our land in his excursions through Gaul, effected a landing—and what did he find? Not barbarians, half naked and stained with woad (although there might have been some such among our country's defenders so attired), but practised troops under able commanders, and with war chariots armed with scythes and other lethal weapons, which bespoke a far more advanced civilization than Cæsar in his "Commentaries," and even our own earlier historians, seemed disposed to admit. Our city was, probably, the capital of the Trinovantes.

Doubtless your readers will vote this a long and unnecessary preamble, and ask what has it to do with Hackney? I would reply, very much; for until these first immigrants reached the Surrey Hills, or Blackheath, there was only land which could be occupied in this direction, say from the banks of the Lea, eastward, to Highgate and Hampstead on the west. And let it be specially noted that the most formidable building for defence as well as a royal residence—the Tower of London—has the Manor of Stebonheath or Stebonhythe, of which Hackney was once a part, in direct contiguity with it. In this direction our Roman invaders looked, and along the high land stretching terrace-like from Hackney Wick, say Whitepost Lane to Stamford Hill, until, trending in a westerly and southerly direction, it nearly, if not quite, touched Highgate Hill, they found land secure from flood and having natural drainage, and only required what they set about to effect—military protection. This they fully accomplished during their stay with us, leaving our country somewhere about A.D. 410, never having thoroughly conquered us, and hence, even at this early period, our national grand refrain was justifiable, "Britons never shall be slaves."

Before I close this sketch of our earliest history, let me state that in the brick-earth dug out in the marshes at the back of Lee Place, Upper Clapton, bones of the woolly-haired rhinoceros and of the elephant have been discovered; and in the case of one imperfect rhinoceros' skeleton (which I examined *in situ*), while only a few of the bones were discovered intact, yet it was plainly perceptible in the surrounding clay that the creature, having died from some unknown cause, had left its carcase stranded in the mud on the shore, just as we see dead dogs on the banks of our streams in the present day. I have also, mounted, a pair of beautiful antlers of a stag that must have roamed the forest about the time of our Lord's nativity, as they are only semi-fossilized, and evidently belonged to an animal which, coming down to drink, had been mired, *i.e.*, caught in the bog and drowned by the incoming tide. To check all cavil as to the character and zoological history of the above-named bones, it is but fair to state that they were submitted to our greatest living comparative anatomist, Sir Richard Owen,* and that the above was his diagnosis.[1]

Referring in recapitulation to the fact that first as traders the Phœnicians sought our islands for their mineral wealth, and that subsequently others came here—the Trojans—as to a place of refuge, it may be well to note that for a long time the Phœnicians kept the source whence they obtained their tin and lead a secret. Refugees, and among them, doubtless, many Israelites, escaping prior to the Exodus from the tyranny of Egyptian bondage, found their way across the Isthmus of Suez to the lands bordering the eastern extremity of the Mediterranean Sea, thence to the ports of Tyre and Sidon, and the districts occupied by Dan and Asher (the maritime tribes of Israel) after their entrance into Palestine, and, joining the Phœnician mariners in their voyages, became, probably, partly identified with them, for Deborah, the judge and prophetess in Israel, thus accounts for their absence when their martial help was required. Subsequently the fierce and merciless inroads of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires again forced them to seek some place of refuge, and they found at last this island home of ours as their permanent resting-place from all their foes—so aptly eulogised by Shakespeare as—

> This royal throne of kings, this sceptered isle,
> This earth of majesty, this seat of Mars,
> This other Eden and demi-paradise,
> This happy breed of men, this little world,
> This precious stone, set in a silver sea,
> This blessed plot, this earth, this realm, this England,
> This nurse, this teeming womb of royal kings.
> This land of such dear souls, this dear, dear land,
> Dear for her reputation through the world.

We return to London, which, surrounded as it was by wide streams and extensive lakes, could be readily defended in other and less protected parts by strong stockades, easily formed from the heavy timber on the spot itself, which had to be cleared, and the adjacent forests. Here, for some few centuries, we leave them practising their simple arts, showing, in some things, a marvellous similarity to Hebrew dogmas and religious polity, and holding ofttimes meetings in the surrounding woods—perhaps near the very spot where I am now writing—and preferring for their woodland assembly the ancient and giant oak, as though a reminder that under an oak in Mamre God and man (in the person of Abraham) took counsel together. From this seclusion warlike Rome aroused them, under the all-conquering Julius Cæsar, and on the 26th August, B.C. 55, his fleet reached the shores of Britain off Dover, whose high cliffs he found to be covered with armed men. So, coasting along, he cast anchor between Walmer Castle and Sandwich, and, after a long and bloody conflict, effected a landing. Retiring after three weeks, he did not return until the following year; landing at the same spot he pushed on to Canterbury, where he had a fierce engagement with the Britons, commanded by Cassivelaunus, whose capital was near the present city of St. Albans. This the Romans afterwards took, and an attack of the Britons on Cæsar's ships and naval encampment having failed, they sued for peace, which was at once granted.

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* Since deceased.

Again we were left, and internecine conflicts filled up the gap until the island was invaded by the Emperor Claudius. Under Tiberius, during the time of our Lord's life on earth and crucifixion, the two nations were on friendly terms, but again war broke out and every effort was made to subjugate the country, but with only partial success, for, in A.D. 47, the Romans had only secured a small strip—London, on the north of the Thames, and a like portion, Southwark, on the south. Again the Romans took up arms, ravaged the country, and took the Isle of Anglesey, destroying the Druidic groves and slaughtering their priests. This aroused the Britons, but the brutal treatment which Boadicea, the widowed Queen of the Iceni (eastern part of our country), and her two daughters received, under the orders of the Roman Procurator, Catus, roused them to the utmost fury.

She marshalled her forces—her camp in Epping Forest is still traceable (8 acres in extent, near Copt Hall)—destroyed Camalodunum (Maldon) with fire and sword, thence on to London, destroying nearly all the inhabitants that remained, and involved Verulamium (St. Alban's) in a similar ruin. In a few days 70,000 persons thus lost their lives. Soon after, Boadicea was defeated in a battle, which, it is said, cost the lives of 80,000 Britons, and, although for 16 years after they waged petty wars, they never gained head again. Tacitus, the historian, was, however, obliged to confess, "The Britons are conquered, not spirit-broken; they may be reduced to obedience, not to slavery." An irregular Roman occupation followed. Roads were made (which are a wonder to this day), earthworks raised, towers, and palaces and villas, with all their strength, their luxury and refinement, until A.D. 407, when they left the country for good. Their highways, whether the great roads as Ermine and Watling Streets, which traversed the whole country, or their smaller ways, also, were constructed with the greatest care, and the stations they occupied at various points along these sundry highways and bye-ways would, doubtless, be specially marked.

That our parish of Hackney had some Roman inhabitants is, therefore, very certain from the interesting find of a sarcophagus, cut out of a solid block of marble, near an old pathway still known as Brooksby's Walk, leading from Homerton High Street, and now along Chatsworth Road to Lea Bridge. It was of white coarse-grained marble, having a beautifully carved side—only one side—with a medallion in the middle of that side, like a bust in *alto relievo* on a Roman altar. The face and costume would be just such as would denote an engineer officer, but not of military rank; there were three lines of inscription too damaged to be deciphered, the lid was wanting (it could not be found anywhere), although the marks of the clamps were there. The sarcophagus had evidently been fixed in a wall, exposing only the sculptured side; there were a few bones in it indicating a man about six feet high; it was almost certainly a Pagan interment. It was found in the natural gravel, two feet six inches from the surface. The impression is that the sarcophagus had been taken out of a wall—perhaps the wall had been removed—it had been opened, rifled of its contents, if there were any apart from the skeleton, and then had been carefully lowered into a hurriedly-made grave, the lid, probably, broken in the forcing open of the coffin and destroyed.[2]

Reverting once more to the sarcophagus, which was mentioned in my last article as having been found at Clapton, it is generally stated that this is the most beautiful, except a like sarcophagus found at the old Roman city of Grantchester, near Cambridge, and now called Ermeswerch, which was taken by the monks to bury in it the holy virgin St. Ætheldryth, who founded the monastery of Ely and died in A.D. 679. Her sister Sexburga, then abbess of Ely and contemporary with Bede, had her remains collected in A.D. 695, and took a fair white marble chest—which had been the last home of some Pagan Roman—for that purpose. Doubtless this last, and the Clapton sarcophagus also, were carved out and sculptured in Italy. The nearest approach to this find is one dug out in Haydon-square in the Minories, but it is of rough stone grit, and far inferior. To fix the approximate date a coin of Galienus, A.D. 259-268, was found near it.

Now it so happens that for long years Clapton-passage has been believed to be an old Roman bye-way, passing westward along the top of Clapton-square, thence along a line of old elm trees in the playground of St. John's Grammar School; from thence all traces are lost, but it is reasonable to suppose that it terminated in the highway from Bishopgate to Ware (so named in John Strype's edition of *John Stow's Survey of London*, 1720); and in Rocque's map of Hackney, 1745, I find the southern extremity of Shacklewell, across which such causeway would run, called "The Crossway," but why so called I cannot discover; Dr. Robinson never mentions the spot, although it is in Rocque's map in his History. Eastward crossing Clapton High-road was an old farm road in line with Clapton-passage, and where this causeway, if continued, met the path then known as Brooksbys-walk, the sarcophagus was found. Thence following a line due north-east across the marshes it touched the old River Lea at a spot known in days gone by as the "Boys' bathing place," because the bottom of the river, elsewhere mud and clay, consisted of some hard substance, smooth, and with greyish sand, no doubt the hydraulic cement with which the Ancient Romans made their fords—the river is here about 64 feet wide, and at most some 4 feet 6 inches deep. On the opposite bank, keeping the same line, is the old Marsh road to Low Leyton. Some years ago a hard, well-made road of forest gravel was found six feet below the present surface on this Essex bank, and tending towards the north-east—probably towards the old copper mills.[3]

Returning to our terrace-line from the site of this find—much that was clear to all observers has been lost by the excessive building on what is now known as Clapton Park—many of the houses are on so small a scale that the trenches for their foundations would be proportionately shallow; hence much might still be found indicating early Roman occupation, in the shape of coins, and, perhaps, earth interments, for only the great and the wealthy were thus left above ground. For instance, at

East Ham, between West Ham and Barking, the burials of a Roman magnate and his family were found, evidently in his own grounds, although Imperial Rome appointed and set out extra-mural cemeteries. Again, Roman urns were dug up in 1849 at the bottom of Shrubland-road, Dalston. During certain repairs at Temple Mills, the south-eastern extremity of our parish, an urn, full of Roman coins in a high state of preservation, from Julius Caesar to Constantine the Great (the latter emperor born at York, and son of the daughter of a British chieftain, born at Colchester), several medals, and a stone coffin containing an entire skeleton, were found in 1783.*

Continuing our course along these gentle heights, we cannot but note how extensive the view of Epping and Hainhault Forests must have been, with the River Lea between carrying its volume of water to the Thames along a channel *at least one mile wide* as far as the ancient town of Ware. Along these eminences, doubtless, the Roman sentry walked —keeping watch and ward—and from this spot, most probably, the advance was sighted of the avenging hosts of the shamefully used Boadicea from her forest encampment, to fall upon London, and thus by timely notice many of its inhabitants escaped the vengeful doom dealt out to the many thousands by the justly incensed queen. Pond-lane and Mill Fields-lane (now Lea Bridge-road) may have been in existence, but I think they were subsequently made. Jeremy's Ferry and Morris' Ferry, so marked and named in Rocque's map, 1745, might also be of much later date, but skirting Lee's brickfield, where the bones were found—as named in the previous article—and thence along Comberton-road to Mount Pleasant-lane, we tread along still higher ground, and our terrace-line culminates in the beautifully swelling plateau forming the grounds of Mr. Bros—well named " Springfield "—Upper Clapton, and above Morris' Ferry.

Here, in 1814, were discovered all the marks of a Roman cemetery. A coffin of hewn stone was found six feet under ground, and on the slope of the land, sixty feet above the marsh from which it rises, in 1837 another coffin was found near the former, and at the same depth—they were lying north and south. In one coffin two skeletons, male and female, were found. Around them a great many human bones were discovered, mixed up with rude pottery. If not an actual cemetery, then most probably, it was a reflex of the interments at East Ham, and we may fairly conjecture that on this rising ground, most beautifully and and strategically situated, may have stood a Roman villa—part dwelling and part fortress or watch-tower—and the residence of the military commandant of this prominent and therefore important outpost of Roman London. May I here venture to suggest to any who may come after me —to those who in years to come shall witness the still further advance of the insatiable builder—that whenever this lovely oasis in our brick-built wilderness shall come under the same curse, all excavations be carried on with as much watchfulness and care as possible, that thus additional light may be thrown on my native parish, Hackney, during its *Roman occupation.* To the north-western boundary of our parish, round Clapton Common to Stamford Hill, the same high land is prolonged, gradually falling until it reaches the valley through which the New River flows.[4]

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*In a work published in 1762 the following appeared:—" There have been discovered of late years in the bottom of Hackney Marsh, between Old Ford and the Wycke, the remains of a " great stone causeway," which is supposed to have been the highway or great road from London to Essex, not far from Temple Mills and passing by a large, ancient farmhouse known as " Rockholt," Low Leyton, Essex. This road was used instead of that which now leads over the bridge between Bow and Stratford, the present Essex high road. Roman coins and other antiquities have been found along its course."

To those of our readers who have not yet visited the few remaining spots of beauty in our parish I would say: Go to Springfield, take your stand in front of the house once the residence of the late Mr. Charles Jacomb, looking to the north-east, and though, alas, buildings have cropped up, and are yet cropping up, in the distant landscape, yet I would venture to affirm that no more beautiful landscape of meadows, forest, hill and water, is to be found, either so near London or anywhere near London, in so small a space. Despite the railway which crosses the track, I have often thought Dr. Watts' lines appropriate:—

> "Sweet fields beyond the swelling flood
>   Stand dressed in living green;
> So to the Jews old Canaan stood,
>   While Jordan rolled between."

And, perhaps, the good old man, during his 30 years' residence with Lady Abney, in Church-street Stoke Newington, may have visited this very spot, and *here*, and not at Southampton, have drawn his inspiration,

CHAPTER II.

Papers IV. V. VI.

BEFORE I ask my readers to join me in a ramble through our once pretty village of Hackney, it is but fair that, without the old and original bumping process against each notable parish boundary-mark, they should be made acquainted with its confines and the points of contact with other parishes. For this purpose I have before me John Rocque's map, 1745, and Ashpital's map, corrected by Edmeston to 1831. Where Hoxton-street ends in Hyde-road, and crosses the Regent's-canal, we are at the extreme south-west corner of the parish, touching Shoreditch. Thence passing due north, and skirting Islington, we take in De Beauvoir Town, which ends at Balls-pond-road, its northern boundary; thence passing eastward as far as Kingsland-road, we proceed northwards, having Stoke Newington to the west. Trending north-westward from Manor-road we reach the extreme west of St. Anne's-road; again pass due east, having Tottenham on the north, as far as the river Lea, south of Tottenham Locks. The course of the old river forms the eastern boundary of the parish, separating it from Walthamstow and Low Leyton, and West Ham and Bow, as far as in a line with Whitepost-lane. Turning west and by south the northern half of Victoria Park (eastern portion) is taken in to Gore-road, Martha-street, the Regent's Canal bridge at Cambridge Heath, and thence by the canal westwards, bearing north to the point from which we started.

Touching the general history of Hackney, we find that Richard de Gravesend, Bishop of London, had free warren granted him by Edward I., 1290, and that a yeoman, one John Duckett, held lands under him; that there were several manors, and one, the Lord's-hold, was attached to the See of London until 1550, when it was surrendered to the Crown by Bishop Ridley, the noble martyr in Queen Mary's reign. There is also clear evidence that the Knights Templar held the manor and parish of Hackney, then called St. Augustine's, and Temple Mills belonged to them. Their possessions afterwards became the property of their rivals, the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and probably soon after this the Parish Church changed the name of its patron saint to St. John of Jerusalem, or, as now designated, St. John-at-Hackney. The residence of these Knights was the Priory in Well-street, subsequently cut up into small tenements, which I remember well—some may still exist. The mansion of the Prior—then called Beaulieu—was sold by the Prior in 1352 to John Blanch and Nicholas Shordych, which stood somewhere about Shore-road, and was called in Stow's time Shoreditch-place, from the aforesaid Nicholas. There was in the old church an ancient brass, inscribed "Here lyes Jone (or Joan) Curteys, daughter of . . . Shordych, Anno 1339."

Before I pass on I give the quaint account of a surprising incident, relative to one who, from her husband's name at least, may have been, according to the custom of that period, one of the native-born inhabitants of Hackney. Richard Hackney, fishmonger, and Sheriff of London in the 15th year of Edward II., A.D. 1322, was with Alice Hackney, his wife, buried in the Church of St. Mary at Hill, Billingsgate. Robert Fabain (an old chronicler) writes: "In the year 1497, in the month of April, some men, in digging for the foundation of a wall by the Church, came upon a coffin of rotten timber, therein the corpse of a woman, whole of skin, and of bones undissevered, and the joints of the arms pliable, without breaking of the skin. This was Alice Hackney, 170 years after her burial. Her body was kept above ground three or four days without noisance,but then it waxen unsavoury,and so was again buried." Among other ancient inhabitants, and steady church-goers, and church supporters, was one Alice Ryder, who was a milkwoman in the City, and made a large fortune thereby. She was a liberal benefactor to the Parish Church, and a brass was affixed to its walls with her effigy, having a milk-pail on her head; died Anno 1517.

Beginning our perambulation, which, of course, is from the great City, we find that in the old time there was a choice of but two roads—one for carriages (and poor enough it was), by way of Whitechapel, the Dog Row, and Cambridge Heath—the other a foot-path, which we will take first. From Bishopsgate we crossed an open space—once a Roman cemetery (observe,without the gate)—and a portion of the Spittle Fields, known now as Bishopsgate Without,Norton Folgate,and Shoreditch,and, to the eastward, Brick-lane. Hackney-road was a rude farm lane, running through agricultural plots on either side, and not used, as now, as the main road to Hackney. We turn down by Shoreditch Church into Virginia-road, and thence along Birdcage Walk, having small tenements, like garden shanties, on either side, and bringing us out into Hackney-road by the side of the "Nag's Head," a tavern at least 200 years old, and nearly opposite Goldsmith's-row.

Between Virginia-road and the Birdcage Walk was a public house called the "Birdcage." A short way from, and in sight of it, were two low tenements standing in their own small garden plots. In one of these cottages, the vile murderers, Bishop and Williams, decoyed and murdered hapless wanderers, selling their bodies to the medical schools for dissection, after the fashion of the notorious Burke, who did the same in Edinburgh, where he was at last detected, captured, and hanged, leaving his name as a title to that style of taking life, "Burking." The process was suffocation in a sleep produced by powerful narcotics. The last victim of Bishop and Williams was an Italian boy, who went about with white mice. His body was found in a well at the back of the cottages. As a young man, curiosity took me to the spot, which was at the back of the cottage. Here the body was found suspended head downwards, and it was surmised that death was produced by drowning. The murderers were then awaiting their justly-awarded doom. The incident left impressions on the public mind which lasted many a year.

Keeping on our way we cross the Hackney-road opposite the old "Nag's Head," and enter Goldsmith's-row, taking its name from a row of picturesque almshouses, founded by a Mr. Morrell, A.D. 1703, and belonging to the Goldsmiths' Company. In my youth they were fronted by a garden blooming with roses and pinks, and many another flower, which ne'er will bloom in that atmosphere at the present day. On the right hand was a large pond behind some rather dilapidated tenements. All are now swept away, and at this moment I find that particular spot entirely cleared, and to let.* We now go on towards the Regent's Canal, which I may as well remind our readers was commenced in 1812 as a continuation of the Grand Junction Canal, running from Uxbridge to Paddington, and was not completed until 1820, its course from Islington towards the Thames and Limehouse being for the most part through open fields.[5]

I must here make another digression, and state that, ere we pass the boundary line of Hackney parish, we have, to our left, Margaret-street, at the western end of which were the only swimming baths then existing near Hackney. They were in a side cutting or dock leading to the Gas Works at Haggerston from the canal, from which they derived their water supply, a strong lattice open fence being their only protection from the canal. I often used them when a boy, but, compared with the Albion and other baths, one can only exclaim, *O tempora, O mores!* I allow the water was good and sweet.[6]

Now we pursue our course, bearing slightly to the right over a small brick footbridge, and then over a dry ditch—another relic of the past. This ditch was all that remained of a brook which once ran from Hampstead across Islington and Kingsland, and past this very spot, forming a boundary line between Hackney, Shoreditch, and Bethnal Green. Of course, the Regent's Canal crossed its track and annihilated it, but for some years the old ditch and footbridge remained ; the carriage way from Hackney-road to Hackney being along Pritchard's-road. The stream fed a very large, deep, and dangerous pond, known as Bunker's Pond between the canal and Hackney-road, about where the three gigantic gasometers now stand. Crossing the little bridge aforesaid, we find ourselves in what was once called (A.D. 1745) Mutton Lane, and over the Canal Bridge, are, in what is now known as the Broadway. Here, on the right, formerly stood the Hackney Bun House. I remember a very large trade being done at it, and that the buns in question rivalled the still more celebrated (only because more aristocratic) Chelsea buns. At the corner facing London Fields was a public-house—still there—once called the " Shoulder of Mutton," but all my time known as the " Cat and Mutton," and I have heard that the Fields themselves were at one time called the Cat and Mutton Fields.

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* Now purchased, and laid out as a public garden.

That we are now in pastoral surroundings, my readers must observe that a smaller lane on the east, running to the south, and parallel with the Broadway, is still called Sheep Lane, and another thoroughfare into Mare-street by the side of St. Michael and All Angels' Church is Lamb Lane. Straight before us, passing northwards to Hackney Town, is the Church Path. Well do I remember the surroundings of London Fields, as nearly all fields, save the belt of good houses known as Lansdowne Place and Terrace—the favourite dwelling-place of many wealthy Jews some sixty years ago. Richmond-road on their northern side was pasture land, with no thoroughfare direct from Mare-street, but where Lansdowne-road now ends in Richmond-road, or rather where the Duke of Marlborough Tavern now stands, we crossed by a footpath from either Lamb-lane or London-lane, and found ourselves in a wide grass-grown farm road, by a pasture field in which stood the Swiss Cottage (a genuine copy of such a continental dwelling), and so due west to Kingsland-road, or by a diversion to the right, round the Swiss Cottage field, along what is now Parkholme-road, to Dalston direct to Kingsland Gate.

Coming back to London Fields, a row of small houses known as London-place formed their first eastern boundary from West-street Triangle. Here dwelt for some few years a fine old English gentleman, an old Colonel in His Majesty's Service, Colonel Hall—father of the world-renowned (in the field of Arts and Art Studies), the late Samuel Carter Hall, editor of the *Art Union*, and husband of the lady through whose touching tale in *Chambers' Journal*, "The Governess," the Brompton Consumptive Hospital was founded, to be followed by many like blessed and kindred institutions. The old colonel, who wore a pig-tail and dressed in the old style, had by reverses of fortune been compelled to give up his carriage and establishment and there live in quiet retirement. With my own family they were intimate friends. As a cadet he was with the army under General Elliott, shut up in the ever-memorable siege of Gibraltar, which lasted three years, seven months, and twelve days. Many a time have I listened to his modest recital of those terrible days—when starvation compelled them to eat even the worn-out leather of their accoutrements. All have passed away—those friends of my boyhood—but they have left a halo of glory around their memory, and from what I know of their subsequent life and conduct one can realize their welcome to that better land of "Well done, good and faithful servants, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." And even the memory of the just is blessed!

There were no houses between London-place and the top of Lamb-lane, but somewhere about where the schools at the back of St. Michael's Vicarage are situated stood a white house with a tower-shaped wing looking on to the Fields. Its occupant was a most eccentric man, who kept himself very much shut up, and when ill would have no doctor. A child of his died without medical aid, and a coroner's inquest was demanded. For several days he resisted all intrusion, barricaded his house, and at night was seen marching up and down on the flat roof of the tower with a loaded gun. This was before the police were established. An entry was at last effected, the man was secured, and an inquest held over the decomposed body of the child, about whose death there was not the slightest suspicion of foul play.

A large lunatic asylum, Pembroke House, with its beautiful grounds, formed the other side of Lamb-lane, and a small brick field between them and the Fields, where St. Michael's Church now stands. The opposite side of the Fields— Wilman's-grove, London-terrace, &c. —bears unmistakeable evidence of self-appropriation of what was once common land. There can hardly be a doubt that the true boundary line should have been carried onward in a strictly northerly course from that before Lansdowne-place to the corner of Lansdowne-road in Richmond-road. On the east from Lamb-lane northwards is Tower-street, formerly the residence of some of our wealthy parishioners. One of the houses—that called Tower House—was the residence of Captain Woodcock, one of whose daughters was the second wife of the immortal John Milton, but her wedded life was short indeed, dying at the birth of her first child and within one year of her marriage. If Hackney has not been the birthplace of many celebrities, they have visited, and must have some regard for the spot, for to Tower-street came that eccentric Daniel De Foe a-courting, so it is said, but whom he maried I do not know. Children of his were baptized and buried in our church. He was rated as a parishioner on the parish books, and it is believed he wrote " Robinson Crusoe," and many of his political and other works in Church-street, Stoke Newington.

From Tower street we follow along the Church-path, here having that title, until we reach Hackney Grove, the plot on which the new Town Hall now stands, and which was once a paddock, a convenient spot for fatted sheep for neighbouring butchers. The houses on the west side are variable in size; two or three of the largest were once the dwellings of rich men who kept their carriages. Before I leave London Fields I ought to have stated that during the summer months the East India Company's Volunteer Regiment—a strong, well-appointed force—used frequently to come there for drill and field manœuvering. Passing the Grove we come to the White Horse. Opposite this inn, in my early days, there was a street paved with cobble stones opening into Mare-street (or Church-street, as it was called). This was devoted to glass coaches, which stood here ready for hire—in fact, a cab stand, only the coaches were heavy, generally worn-out private carriages, and all pair-horse. Two or three small houses and shops, by the "Britannia," now fill up that gap.

We next find the Rev. Dr. Spurstowe's almshouses on our left. Six one-roomed cottages, with open ground in front, and a compact garden, to be used in common by the inmates, behind. Comfortable they can be made, and are made, but one could wish they were in a less confined space, and while I do not for one moment doubt the public-house exactly opposite is properly conducted, such an outlook is scarcely desirable for those who, retired from the world, and then assured of certain comforts for the residue of their advanced lives, are of necessity looking for a better—that is, a heavenly—inheritance. Perhaps the London School Board may require another site (it would scarcely be a hardship to make way for them) near that spot. The Church-path gradually bends round into the main street—now Mare-street—having the "Cock" Tavern— one of the old public-houses of Hackney—on one side, and perhaps the still older "Kings Head" opposite. Of the "Cock" Tavern there are two copper tokens—local monies—in existence, one dated 1651 and the other 1656.[7]

As to the history of the Church-path, it would appear that there was always, even for previous centuries, a desire to keep up an open causeway between Hackney or, latterly, Clapton—and London, and there is interesting evidence, as we shall see, that much of the merchandise brought from the City to our parish was by hand burthen, or by porters, in place of the many light and often gaily painted vans which now accommodate us. To keep this pathway in repair one, Mrs. Margaret Audley, by will, dated 18th November, 1616, left thirty-five pounds a-year, part to go to repairing bridges, stiles and rails, made at her own cost, between Clapton and Shoreditch. Then we have David Doulben, formerly a vicar of Hackney, but then bishop of Bangor, writing a letter from his palace :—

> "Bangor House, Shoe Lane, London, 11th November, 1633.—Directed to the inhabitants of the parish of Hackney, but especially to the poorest sort of people, that maintain their livelihood by carriage of burthens to the City of London : All blessing from the Fountain above and below be multiplied upon you."

And then with his love he hands over £30.

> "This mite according to my poor estate, which I have sent by my worthy friend, Richard Davies, to be employed for continuing and repairing of the causeway or footway leading from Clapton and Hackney Church unto Shoreditch."

This letter and the gift were written and bestowed within less than a fortnight of the good Bishop's death. A pleasing, yet deeply affecting memorial.

CHAPTER III.

(Papers vi. vii. viii.)

We will now make our way to the village of Hackney by the original coach road, and I would remind my readers that from the fact that Hackney was formerly really a hamlet of the greater and more important manor of Stebonheathe (Stepney), there was on that account a propriety in having the leading thoroughfare as much as possible within its boundaries, and doubtless the residence of the Sovereign—and the seat of Government in olden times—the Tower of London—would render such a thoroughfare the Royal road. So passing from Aldgate we follow the course of the Whitechapel-road until we reach the first mile post from the City, and what was thus appropriately termed Mile End. Here at the four ways meeting was the turnpike gate. Turning to the left we enter the road then and still called the Dog-row. Why so called one can only conjecture that in its neighbourhood might have been the kennels for the City hounds in convenient proximity to the Epping Forest highway.

We pursue our course along a good wide, but at one time a very badly kept, road, passing by Bethnal Green House, now an asylum, a portion of which may have been Kirby Castle, built in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, by one John Kirby, and believed to be the residence of the blind beggar of Bethnal Green, although as old Stow quaintly observes, "he may have beggared himself in building it—as the outlay was most extravagant." In 1650 all the surroundings were hedged in pasture land until we reach the Old Bethnal Green-road parallel with the present Bethnal Green-road, and called in the old maps the Driftway. I surmise it was the original Roman-road to the Old Ford across the river Lea. At the end of this Driftway the ancient traveller found himself on what remained of Cambridge Heath—a square open space at the northern boundary of which was Cambridge Heath turnpike gate; an obelisk now stands upon its site, at the eastern end of Hackney-road. On the right hand side is Newmarket-terrace, a significant reminder of the name of the Heath on which it stands, and of the road leading to the old, but still popular racing town. Behind the terrace there was formerly a large piece of water, extending almost to where the Bethnal Green Workhouse Offices now stand. As evidence of the character of the road along which we have come, I may state that an ancestor, one Dr. Blackmore, then resident in the newly built and fashionable Wellclose-square, Wapping (his next door neighbour was the Danish Ambassador), whenever called to a patient in Hackney always had four instead of the customary two horses put to his carriage for the journey; this was between 1760—1790. I admit if roads were bad, carriages were heavier and far more clumsy in build. One other incident, as proving that other dangers beset the traveller, may not be out of place here. I quote from Simpson's valuable record:—

> "*London Chronicle*, Saturday, January 11, 1763. One Morris Delaney was committed to Newgate by Sir John Fielding (a notable police magistrate, and probably the son of Harry Fielding, the novelist) charged with robbing Mr. Toulmin, the surgeon of Hackney, of a sum of money and a silver salve box. That a lad, one of the gang, dogged the coach of Mr. Toulmin from Old Gravel-lane, which place he left about seven o'clock on Friday night, to the place where the coach was stopped, and then gave a signal to Delany and another who started out of the hollow way and robbed Mr. Toulmin—the lad himself disappearing."

The familiar name of Toulmin in Hackney is therefore not without reason, for this surgeon must be four or five generations back, and it is a personal gratification to the writer to record even this memento of a long line of good men and worthy practitioners. There was of course no Regent's Canal and therefore no Bridge in those earlier times, and we come at last into Mare-street itself. The name "Mare" I believe was originally "Meer" or "Mere," having distinct reference to the somewhat marshy or water-lined course of the road. It is believed from annotations from the Minutes of the Vestry which shall be briefly given, that the road had a ditch for drainage on either side with posts, rails, and bridges for the footpath, somewhat like what we still have in Edmonton. These records also furnish proof of the necessity felt by the parishioners to ensure the safety of travellers alike from robbers as from quagmires from

Cambridge Heath to Hackney. Thus at a Vestry meeting held 28th December, 1681, it was agreed that a watch-house should be forthwith erected on Cambridge Heath, a Mr. Acrod and a Dr. Baxter being commissioned to see the work done. November 13, 1683, "That an arch be made over the common shore at the lower end of Huntington's close near Mr. Castaigne's house at the parish charge." April 15, 1708, an order was made and six Vestrymen told off to carry it out, to survey the wayes, particularly Mare-street, which was scandalously bad and dangerous, from the Green Man (now the grocer's shop at the corner of Morning-lane) to Cambridge Heath, and on the 22nd April, 1708, the following report of the survey and order thereon were given :—

1. The ditches from Green Man to the farmhouse late Mr. Man's, be well scoured.
2. That from thence the ditches on Mr. Bird's side be carried on from the pond to Mr. Carter's wall, and where by buildings the ditches cannot be carried on then the draynes, their substitutes, be kept clean and the ditches on the other side from Mr. Foreman's houses to Man's Farm, be well scoured to carry the water towards the brook in Church-street.
3. Carried onwards a good drayne is ordered to be made past Mr. Blackmore's house, and to be continued to the moat that goes into Well-street.
4. The common shores from Mr. King's new houses to Clerk's buildings and so to the great pond be mended and cleaned, &c., &c.
5. The ditches to be made deeper and larger as far as Cambridge Heath and cleaned, &c., &c.
6. That a person be appointed to inspect the roads and make openings that the water run from the road into ditches or ponds, that lye contiguous to them.

March 5, 1718.—The moat adjacent to Mr. Cleer's house in Mare-street is full of mud and dirt, and ought to be amended by the owners of the land against it. March 27, 1722.—Agreed that the arch over the ditch and under the cross-waie leading from Jerusalem Court to the White House, formerly called Sir Thomas Marsh's House, be enlarged and extended by reason of the narrowness of the road in that part of the highway. I believe a part of that house still exists in Jerusalem Gardens. On May 5, 1723, a still more serious affair is reported to the Vestry by Henry Ashton, Esq., who states that he, with some other inhabitants, in one of the stage coaches going to London, was flung into the huge pond in Mare-street, to their great hurt, and hazard of their lives. The said pond being very dangerous, especially in the night-time, Mr. Southern is forthwith ordered to kase in, with substantial and sufficient posts and rales, the said pond, leaving only a passage into the same at the two ends or extremity thereof. For some time I have wondered where this great pond could have been, and could get no information, but on carefully examining Roque's map of 1745, I find a piece of water clearly marked out as situated opposite where the Morley Hall now stands, and I should say that its site was at the north-western corner of King Edward's-road, where the two cottages, the Roman Catholic Church and row of shops now stand, and it is especially named in the report of April 22, 1708, above given.[8]

On January 11, 1724, allusion is made to money received and disbursed by Sir Daniel Dolins towards the apprehension of highwaymen—a subscription having been made for that purpose, and orders given for a stricter watch to be kept along the highways. On 15 February, 1728, it was considered necessary to have an arch made over the ditch next the road side, beyond the "Green Man,"* in Church-street. On 2 October, 1728, "agreed that two watchmen be set on the horse-road, and two on the foot-way, leading from Hackney to London, and that the watchmen on the horse-road do patrole together," &c., &c. Crossing what is now the Cambridge Heath bridge over the Regent's Canal, we are in the parish of Hackney. To the left are one or two good houses looking on to the canal, in a roadway that leads to to the Cat and Mutton Bridge. These houses, now public institutions, were formerly good residences with large and well-appointed gardens, beyond which west-ward were open fields, skirted on the east by Sheep-lane and on the west by what is called the Broadway. The next building over the bridge on the left is the Rose and Crown public-house, which sixty years ago had pretty pleasure gardens; some years back it had the not infrequent fate of such buildings—being burnt down. About the same date (60 years back) were some pretty villa residences with beautiful gardens, at that time flourishing with roses and the like, undamaged by the now increasing smoke of London and its neighbourhood. We then come to Ash Grove, a short, quiet lane with no thoroughfare. There were only houses on the right hand side, and I believe all the above-named residences are still standing, although wondrously altered by the addition of shops, or conversion into factories. One good house in Ash Grove was for years the residence of a Mr. Dennis (no relation to the late William Dennis, of Church-street, grocer, who was also a very good artist), a painter of considerable talent, having a well-appointed studio. As friends of my family we interchanged visits in those village days of Hackney.

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* Now Laud Kennett's, Grocer.[9]

His son, George Dennis, now Sir George Dennis, was a great traveller, and has gained literary and classic renown from the fact that he was the first who penetrated, and described the results of his thorough and careful investigations of the reign of ancient Etruria in Italy. He wrote a valuable work on the ancient Etruscans, their origin, their habits from the cradle to the grave, and I think an almost entire room in the British Museum is devoted to the memorials of that lost and ancient race. It is said from them the ancient Romans sprang, and when I repeat the word "lost" I would annex a query? Let my readers visit the chamber in the Museum, note well the features so well preserved on their monuments and tombs, and then ask themselves if they are not the surviving descendants of that well-nigh forgotten race? Trace them as migrants back to their eastern home on the borders of the Caspian Sea, thence through the ages, gradually travelling on, until they have reached as a nation—in several and, perhaps, rather widely-spread detachments—their present home in these Isles of the West, to found and form the greatest, most glorious, and the most unconquerable empire the world has ever seen. Do not be startled readers, if, in manifesting the courage of my opinions in this large digression from the history of old Hackney, I ask are we the lost Ten Tribes, deported B.C. 721 by the Assyrians from Palestine to the shores of the Caspian Sea? Is our beloved Queen a lineal descendant of King David? and is that stone in Westminster Abbey, in the Coronation chair, which for ages has been the seat of the first enthronement of our Sovereigns, a pillar of witness—twice blest and consecrated—as well as the Pillow of Jacob himself?

Resuming, on the right hand side of Ash Grove, Mare-street, we have an old-fashioned terrace, probably built in the early Georgian era, and, I should consider, unaltered. On the left hand are still some good residences, for instance the late Dr. Tidy's, the late Mr. Dupree's and others, each having spacious grounds, first cut across by the Great Eastern Railway Viaduct, and now being rapidly converted into small building plots. On our right, where a handsome Congregational Church now stands, was formerly a very picturesque retreat, a white villa residence (Marmaduke Matthews, Esq.) standing far back from the road in its own grounds, Another large church impinges on its boundaries; then there was another private house, and at what is now the King Edward's tavern, a good family residence—still standing, Queen Anne style—called the Mansion House, and at the ealier time, mentioned above, the residence of the late Thomas Hensley, Esq. Opposite is the Triangle, and behind that, on the site of Morley Hall, stood some good old houses, very unpretentious, but dating about 1660. Two paintings of one occupied for many years by the late Mr. Gopp are still preserved in the family.[10]

We then pass on to one of the old Hackney hostelries, "The Flying Horse," which still bears its ancient and picturesque appearance, and was known as one of the old posting houses to Cambridge and Newmarket, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. I may here state that, in 1774, it was said that nearly one hundred Hackney families kept their own carriages, and, as corroboration of this it is curious to note how very precise were the instructions, as set forth in the minutes of the Parish Vestry, that the two Church Beadles should preserve special order in the setting down and taking up of several families who came in their coaches to the Church. Two doors from the tavern was, 50 years ago, a good substantial, but plain, chapel, built in 1812 for the Baptists, under the pastoral charge of the late Rev. F. A. Cox, LL.D., whom I knew almost as well as my old neighbour, the Rev. De Kewer Williams, has lately stated he did. The portly presence, dressed in style of the gentleman of some 30 or 40 years before that, viz., swallow-tailed coat, open waistcoat, shirt frilled front with white cravat, knee breeches, black silk stockings, and (if I remember right) buckled shoes, still comes vividly to my memory. He was a good preacher, cheerful and urbane in his manner, and had a large congregation.[11]

I remember one notable occasion, on a week-day evening, when the public baptism, by entire immersion of quite a large number of youth and beauty of both sexes, caused the chapel to be crammed to excess by all sorts and conditions of men and women. I am told that a sketch of that particular function is in existence. It certainly would have attracted some of the snap-shot photographers at the present day—an art in those days fortunately unknown. The rev. gentleman had been gathered to his fathers (I do not know the date of his death) some short while, when one Saturday evening, 26th August, 1854, smoke was seen issuing from the chapel, and in close proximity to the organ,. which had been left only a few minutes by the organ builder. Before any step to extinguish the fire could be taken, or efficient help arrive, the whole building was in flames, and, as myself an eye witness, I never saw more rapid combustion. If further proof were needed how insanitary burials under churches or chapels, in vaults or graves, are, this fire furnished another, for the stench from the flames, burning timber, water converted into steam, &c., &c., was absolutely overpowering. The Chapel was burnt to its foundations, but the congregation was not daunted, and the present noble building arose from its ashes. Singular to relate, the organ builder, who had just left his work, was then engaged in trying a new organ which he had erected in the then new Wesleyan Chapel, Richmond-road.

Coming back to King Edward's-road, let me direct attention to the statement already made that at its north-western end, in Mare-street, there is every evidence, by the depression in the ground level, that some former excavation in the land has been filled in, hence the surmise that here was situate the "great pond." Passing on towards Well-street we come to an extremely narrow turning, scarcely room for one vehicle; on the one side a shop, on the other some very small, if not squalid, tenements called, I believe, Tryon's Court. This inlet opens into a lane of ordinary width, on the right modern houses, on the left some which from their style must have been built between 1650 and 1700. In the Tyssen library there is a book entitled "The Memoirs of Thomas Tryon, a wealthy merchant, written by himself" (a somewhat anomalous description), dated 1705. No doubt this short road, which ended in a footpath sixty years ago, passing through a market garden in Shore-place, was formed on his estate, and that he lived in the largest of these old-fashioned mansions. William Bray, Thomas Craven, and William H. Carey were among its later residents, that is, from 1800 to 1850. The road has been carried into Shore-road and (as I conceive with questionable taste) re-named Tudor-road. Why should such efforts be made by the authorities to blot out even the slightest vestiges of the past? Beyond this narrow turning were two large red brick houses with carriage sweep before them, built about 1750, and at one time the abode of wealthy gentlemen. One was occupied by the Rev. Mr. Wright, son of the late proprietor of Pembroke House, nearly opposite,[12] Pembroke House was an earlier building with spacious grounds behind it, latterly an East India Company's Lunatic Asylum. It has disappeared, and part of its site is occupied by shops and a short wide street leading to Helmsley-street, and parallel with Lamb-lane. Could this have been the residence, or rather on the foundations of a former dwelling of William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, to whom the estate of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem was granted by Edward VI. in 1547? I admit that latterly Brooke House, Upper Clapton, may have been his residence, still the situation of this Pembroke House as well as its name, so near to the Prior's Mansion, Shore House, renders it more than probable. How strange it seems that our predecessors in Hackney, some two centuries ago, when ancient houses were still standing, and the names of their present and former occupants must have been known, seem to have carefully remembered to forget, and even failed to note down such simple memorials of the past.[13]

The two houses next to Tudor-road are completely hidden. A row of shops built on their carriage sweep shuts them up, and anxious to know whether they were still in existence, I went down Tudor-road and passing up a gateway on the left found myself confronted with the backs of the good old houses, now converted into fronts and the houses into a factory. *Sic transit gloria mundi!* Their gardens a row of small houses in Tudor-road. Passing on we come to the house once occupied by one of Hackney's old doctors, Dr. Mordaunt, an old and valued acquaintance for the short remaining period of his life. The house most appropriately bears his name. A large linendraper's built on a garden front conceals from view another old mansion of the history of which I am ignorant. Just turning down on the right is the wide opening of Well-street, and two or three old houses with shops which have been spared us to show what was doubtless the style of tradesmen's dwellings in Hackney some two hundred years ago.

Pursuing our course from London, I note a large house which once stood at the north-eastern corner of Well-street, with a good sized garden before it, long since swept away. As to the origin of the name Well-street, if, as is probable, it was from some notable well, there was formerly a pump in the open yard opposite—free to all comers—and in that yard was a wheelwright's shop and shed, a baker, a Mr. Austin, having a shop at the corner. In Mare-street, at the corner of Lamb-lane, was a very good residence, built about 1720; it had trees and a small court before it. Then we come to a still older house standing farther back, with a large and (to my personal knowledge) very productive kitchen garden behind it, occupied for years by a retired, wealthy goldsmith. A little "tuck shop," with sweets and toys, well known to all the youngsters round, and a small room above it, forming a house not bigger than a summerhouse, was stuck close to the public path and in front of the former house, and that I am about to describe.

How it came there no one knows; and there was no special building enactments in those days enjoining adherence to a particular frontage line. This other house stood well back from the road, and its good-sized front garden, with old-fashioned flowering trees, and flowers, was, with the house itself, much below the present road level. The house was most picturesque, at least of Elizabethan if not of Henry VII.'s time. At the entrance, in the centre, a porch, at one step still lower level, with a seat on each side. The house had a gabled front, with strong oak beams as a framework, and lath and plaster between. The rooms were spacious, but low; but the house, which we often visited, was most comfortable. Behind it a large garden, running as far back as the front railings of the buildings, now facing the London Fields Railway Station, which doubtless formed the western boundary of the original estate. It was thought to be more than a legend that this was, for a time, the residence of Sir Walter Raleigh in his happiest days. One conspicuous object in the garden was a very fine old mulberry tree, often requisitioned by the writer, for silkworms first, and the fruit for self afterwards. It was in this latter time the scene of a painfully tragic event, which memory just recalls—the apprehension of an only son for forgery, his subsequent conviction and execution (names, for obvious reasons are withheld—all immediately concerned have passed away). It was said to have been the last execution for that crime. His body, given up to his friends, now lies in a vault—well known to us—in Hackney churchyard.[14]

CHAPTER IV.

(Papers x., xi. and xii.)

ANOTHER good house in Mare-street, which also had extensive grounds, coach-house and stabling, still stands, and is now the Elizabeth Fry Refuge. It immediately adjoined the old house just described, and was, for some time occupied by a wealthy London merchant, Thomas Wilson, Esq., M.P. (for a short while) for the City of London. On the opposite side, coming from Well-street, was first the garden of the house at the top of Well-street, then the stonemason's yard, kept by one Pile, which still exists under another mason; then a good house standing back, known to several of the youth of 60 years ago as Mr. Clennell's School. One who subsequently achieved fame in China, Edgar Bowring, had his first lessons here, and, if memory serves aright, another, who became Lord Mayor of London, and others who in Lloyd's or the Stock Exchange, made their mark. Next this was a chemist and apothecary's shop. In 1800 this was a stationer's, with a comfortable reading room at the back, suited to the wants of that day. when daily penny papers and threepenny and sixpenny magazines were not issued forth by the million to supply the literary voracity of the thousands, and to be flung in at their respective street doors. In 1815 it became a chemist's, making the second, only, in that calling throughout the whole village of Hackney. It is now a a very useful and excellent restaurant, suiting, by its good, plain, and inexpensive bill of fare, the many hands now employed in the several factories roundabout (especially in the shoemaking trade) which have recently sprung up and now abound in that neighbourhood. There is a court adjoining, down which are Saxony Cottages. Some there were built about 1834, and cover the site of a large timber-yard owned by the father of the well-known and well-beloved Rev. De Kewer Williams. This was the scene of one of the very few *large fires* which have occurred in our village.[15]

This part of Mare-street reminds us of the great Reform Bill, and the illuminations in rejoicing at its passing, in June, 1832. The old Tory Wilson opposite, and the no less Tory chemist entertaining other views, would have closed their shutters as in mourning, but it would not do. A rabble rout, coercive as the Radicals are even now towards all who think fit to differ from them, paraded the streets, and would have smashed the windows if they failed to give the then popular sign. However, in each case farthing rushlights saved their windows, but it was an awfully anxious night. Before we leave this spot we may take note of the road level, evidently from the level of Raleigh's House just referred to. The road must at this point have been much lower, by at least two or three feet, making a marked rise as it bends towards the left on the way to St. Thomas' Square, and in those days it was more than it is now, for there is a most perceptible rise.[16]

Proceeding onward, we have on the right hand new and substantial buildings in red brick, being Lady Holles Girls' School, an ancient foundation removed from Cripplegate. On its site stood a handsome mansion, formerly occupied by a branch of the Hankey family (London bankers), and subsequently by C. B. Stutfield, Esq., J.P., a valued parishioner, and an energetic member of the House Committee of the London Hospital. Behind the house was an extensive garden with a terrace walk in front and some of the fine old elm trees which the good taste of the present occupants has preserved. Next to this is the Catholic Apostolic Church, which, with its several appurtenances, stands on the garden attached to a white-fronted house, the original residence of the minister of St. Thomas' Square Chapel. Here resided the Rev. Samuel Palmer, who was its minister fifty years, and died in 1813, and afterwards his son George Palmer, Esq., whose carriage and pair of white horses were a familiar object in the neighbourhood; he died in 1844. His family have long since left the neighbourhood, but their name is perpetuated in the celebrated, and at one time most popular, "Palmer's candles" the invention of a member of the family. The house is now the residence of a medical man, part of the original garden is the cemetery behind, now dedicated (as an open space) to the use of the public for ever.[17]

St. Thomas' Square Chapel, built in the year 1772, is the actual survival of an old Presbyterian Dissenters' Meeting House, dating from 1600. Here preached Philip Nye and Adoniram Byfield, two eminent Puritan divines, who were resident in Hackney from 1620-40, if not to a later period; the baptism of two daughters of Nye in 1634-36, and a son of Byfield in 1636, are found in our parish registers. The Chapel formerly stood on the opposite side of the street, and in the staircase of a small linen draper's shop, now closed (No. 311), may still be seen some of the wainscoat panelling of the gallery in the old chapel, built in 1715. The ministers after the above-named were Dr. William Bates (died 1699), Matthew Henry, the great commentator (died 1714), John Barker, an intimate friend of Dr. Doddridge, who died in 1762. He was followed by Samuel Palmer, who was succeeded by the late Rev. Henry Forster Burder, D.D. Other ministers have somewhat rapidly succeeded, one of the latter is Mr. Picton, now a Member of Parliament.[18]

Before I make further progress I would ask leave to set out the character of these sketches by way of interlude. I am toiling away "lonesome leisure hours" in thus reviewing old memories, and in spirit perambulating streets and lanes, gardens and fields, the aspects of which have so completely altered within the last fifty years, that were our old fellow parishioners, who have in that period passed away from among us, once again to visit their old resorts they would prove as ignorant of the several localities as the places are of them, and my intent is to follow the leading of the almost immortal Pepys, and his more staid compeer Evelyn, in introducing here and there little bits of anecdote or even gossip (if readers like it) having reference to the several houses or localities mentioned, in humble imitation of the aforesaid writer, but without the egotism, especially, of the versatile Pepys.

The challenge admitted in the columns of *The Mercury* has been already kindly responded to, and that by an old acquaintance, as well as a learned local naturalist, Mr. Collis Willmott, of the Triangle, Hackney. Under his correction I confess to two errors, one of which is that the

Mansion House, a large family house, once occupied by a relative, no longer exists, and therefore forms no part of the King Edward Tavern. Shops now occupy its site. Mr. Willmott once caught an owl in the grounds belonging to it; he also, some forty years ago, shot a snipe where St. Thomas's-road now runs, and brought down one of a flight of eleven wild ducks on South Hackney Common. But an interesting bit of old Hackney proves to be the house in which he resides at the Triangle. It belonged to a Jewish family named "Jalfin," whose ancestors bequeathed to them a large fortune to be held by them "as long as grass grew and water ran." The house was built about 1600.[19]

A superb specimen of early woodwork of the very best quality; the doorways eight feet in height, the window frames with thirteen rose and sunk panels all solid, and the staircase four feet wide from top to bottom of the house, heavily panelled with carved stringings and massive rails; the walls are deal panelling painted. It is but fair to add that the house is in the best possible hands for careful and effective preservation. Another prowl in that direction caused me to look after two other good houses of more modern sort between Ash-grove and the Canal-bridge, on the west side of Mare-street. There I found them, behind the now too-frequent screen of shops built on their front gardens, and at the back of No. 47, and other shops they still stand. Fifty years ago it was said these two houses were built by the late Rev. Dr. Andrew Reed, father of the late Sir Charles Reed, out of the profits of the sale of a kind of religious novel entitled "No Fiction."[20]

Exactly opposite where the Catholic Apostolic Church now stands in Mare-street was a very pretentious, large villa residence, standing very far back from the road, with a circular carriage sweep before it. Here dwelt for some years a good Hackney family named Charles, the head of which was an influential member of St. Thomas-square Chapel. The grounds behind communicated with other extensive premises attached to a well-built mansion in London Lane. In their last stage (for both houses have disappeared) the gardens were thrown into one, each house forming either the male or female departments of a lunatic asylum, the proprietors of which were Drs. Oxley and Ayre. The latter, a talented medical man died ere he reached his prime, but Dr. Oxley (his father-in-law) lived on for some years. He was an excellent, but eccentric man, and might be accounted one of the fathers of teetotalism ; and when at last compelled to the use of a bath chair might be seen distributing therefrom tracts mostly dealing with his favourite theme. He hailed from the North of England, and was a hot and no mean controversialist on temperance. His creed did not influence the treatment of his patients, and the testimony of the friends of those who were placed under his care was that a kinder, and more considerate practioner never lived. Such is the portrait of one of my former friends.[21]

We next pass a somewhat old house—Elm House—(*tempus* William III.), and now come to the " Nags Head." This, now re-built, was a somewhat old tavern, and a meeting place for the cricketers whose pitches were in London-fields. St. Thomas'-square is, and was anything but picturesque. The centre was a field with an old irregular fence around it, but a little interest attaches to some of the inhabitants of the Square. An old red brick house at its south-eastern corner was for some time the residence of Mr. (afterwards Sir Charles) Reed (son of Dr. Andrew Reed), whose characteristic portrait now adorns our Town Hall. One of the houses at the east side was for a time the residence of Dr. Ainsworth, the compiler of the once popular Latin dictionary ; another by John Simpson, Esq., J.P., father of a goodly family ; some of them my schoolfellows and playmates ; and one the collector and publisher of those deeply interesting Ecclesiastical and Vestry statistics of old Hackney, to which I have had occasion to refer during these perambulations.[22]

The aforesaid John Simpson was a " man of mark," and should any of his family still survive and see these lines, I am sure they will scarcely be offended at the statement of their father's which brought the house down with thunders of applause, and enhanced his merits a thousand fold. As doyen (senior) of the local magistracy, his health was proposed at a large parochial banquet at which I was a guest. In returning thanks he set before us his own life, and present position, as to what steady industry could accomplish under the blessing of Divine Providence.— Said he : " I did not come up to London with the proverbial half-crown in my pocket, but my financial position was little better, and I glory in the thought that I was once a shepherd's boy and tended my flock amidst the hills of Cumberland." If I remember aright he was a ship broker or an under-writer at Lloyds' ; and was a man whom everyone esteemed.

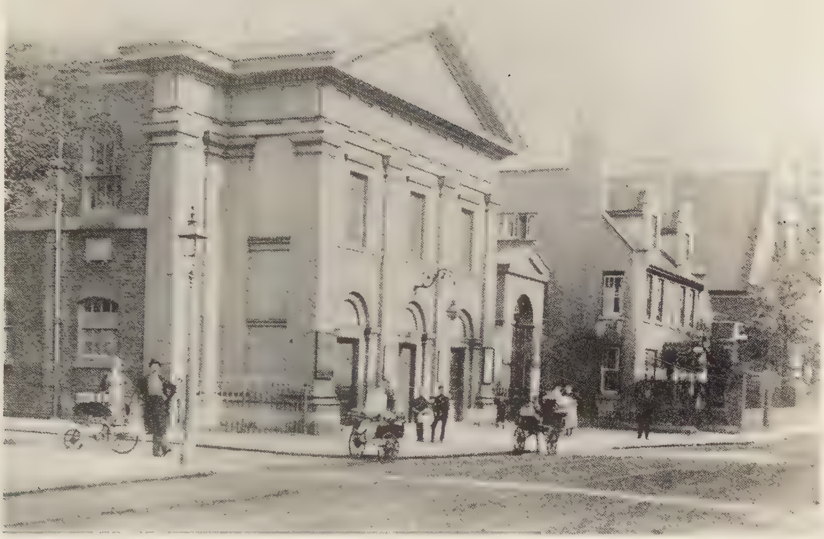
He died in July 1858, aged 76. A monument erected by his children over his vault in Hackney Churchyard, has this epitaph—

"The integrity of the upright shall guide them."

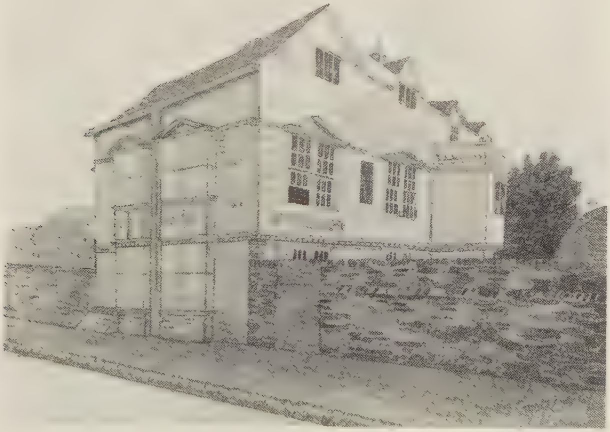
To the north-east of the square lived, in a house still standing at the corner of Loddiges-road, some forty years ago, an old man named Ward, just over 100 years of age. His father was a pawnbroker in Holborn, and his house faced St. Andrew's Church, Holborn-hill. During the Lord George Gordon Riots their house was attacked by the mob for fire-arms, and they were obliged to keep it barricaded. It was deeply interesting to listen to his vivid description of those two or three fearful days; the sacking of Newgate Prison, and the pile of dead bodies which in the early morning his family discerned heaped upon the church steps before them; most of them victims of drink and of fire, as the barrels of gin stolen from Child's distillery were broached by the mob, who drank the spirit as it flowed down the gullies, and being accidentally or by design fired were some of them burnt as they lay along the stream. His statement was a striking confirmation of Dickens' account in "Barnaby Rudge."

A line of red-brick houses formerly stood between London-lane and the "Horse and Groom" tavern. In one of these Mr. Conrad Loddiges (the founder of what for many years was known as Loddiges-gardens) first lived. His predecessor, a celebrated gardener, both in planning and cultivation, one John Busch, (having been engaged by the Empress of Russia, Catherine II., to lay out her gardens) sold his business and grounds in 1771, to Mr. Conrad Loddiges, who then moved to Barber's Barn, of which more anon. Busch's original nursery appears to have been nearer Well-street. About this spot also resided a notorious character known as Hannah the Prophetess, somewhere about 1650.[23]

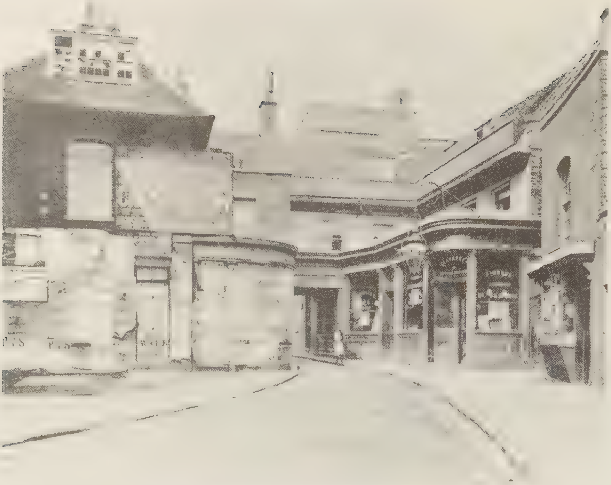
One house, facing the centre of St. Thomas-square, was very large, and from its character had evidently been a school for boys, It was thought that here the late Lord Beaconsfield was for a time a scholar, and there was a legend that his conversion to Christianity was due to a sermon he heard at Hackney Church, from the Rev. Archdeacon Watson, the then Rector. Passing on we come to the residence of Joseph Toulmin, by where Ellingfort-road now runs, for many years the leading medical man of Hackney, a son, or perhaps grandson of the



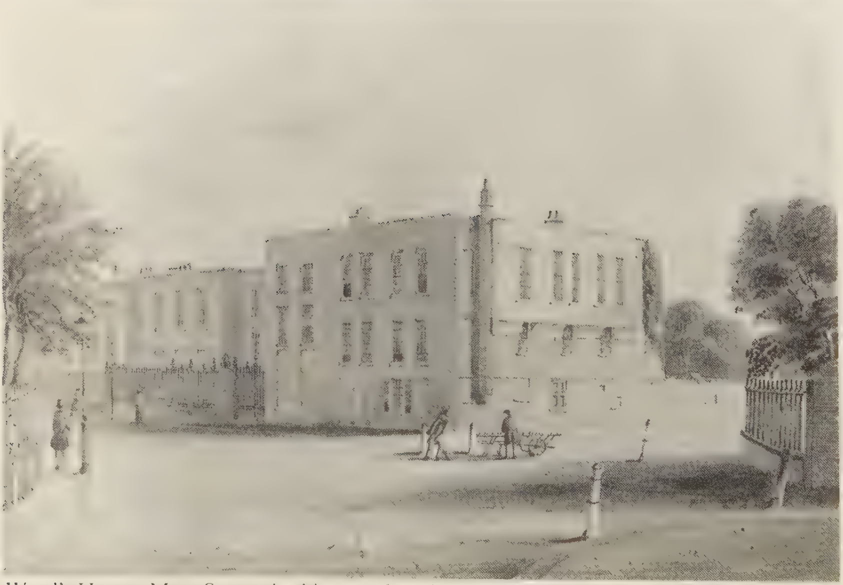
St Thomas' Square Chapel and St John the Baptist Church.
A photograph looking south down Mare Street by Alfred Braddock, 1891.
(HAD P10207)



Barber's Barn, Mare Street, east side when used as Mr Worsley's School. Watercolour, possibly by T. Fisher late 1790s.
(HAD P12065)



The Flying Horse public house, Exmouth Place, No 149 Mare Street, 1903. (GLRO)



Ward's House, Mare Street, looking south and showing the junction with Dalston Lane. Watercolour by an unknown artist about 1830. (HAD WP4426) doctor who was robbed, as referred to in a previous article. His very handsome carriage and pair of horses, with coachman and footman, was a well-known spectacle in the streets. He passed away some years ago, and even his sons—Frederick and Frank—have joined the majority, each, however, at a ripe old age. All were skilful practitioners.

We next come (fifty years ago) to the old "Horse and Groom," a very picturesque wayside inn, timber built, with seats outside in the space which still exists, and a fine unbrageous chestnut-tree in the centre over-shadowing them. Behind were pleasantly situated tea-gardens, extending to the Church Path on the western side. This spot was a pleasant and well-kept resort for way-farers and *junkettings*, when London Town was further off both in time and space than it is now. Crossing the road and taking the eastern side from St. Thomas'-square we pass some shops, and then a narrow lane, coming to what was originally a well-built residence, the garden wall of which skirted the lane to its termination in a footway to Paradise Fields. This house now fronted by a pawnbroker's and another shop, was at one time a fashionable ladies' school, very much patronised by Yorkshire, especially Hull, merchants. The Hull and Lincoln coaches used at "breaking up" times to make a detour, and take their course down Hackney-road, and through Hackney, joining the north-road again at Stamford-hill, to secure their booked girl passengers either to or from Hull. Private houses were continued up to Devonshire-road (or Place as it was formerly called). In one of them resided for a while Edwin Fox, founder of the now popular firm of Edwin Fox and Bousfield. A road running eastward was formerly Devonshire-place, having at one time no outlet at its eastern end.[24]

Here (as we learn from an interesting letter in *The Mercury*, of the 25th June last, from a Mr. Starkey, a deacon), a handsome chapel, known as Trinity Chapel, was built in the year 1832, for a then popular Calvinistic Nonconformist Minister, the Rev. Thomas Hughes, who formerly ministered in Well-street Chapel, long since pulled down. He had at one time a very large congregation. It seems an attempt was made by two (so-called) "prophets" from the Catholic Apostolic Church to introduce the unknown tongues, but this was happily frustrated. Mr. Hughes eventually lived in almost complete retirement on the chapel premises (he was a bachelor) and died in 1872, in the 75th year of his age, and the 46th of his ministry. Mr. Starkey has my thanks for these gleanings from his authentic letter.[25]

The first house from Devonshire-road—now the Central Hackney Conservative Club—was for many years the residence of the Rev. Dr. Henry Forster Burder, the talented minister of St. Thomas-square Chapel, a man beloved and respected by all who knew him—Church of England and Nonconformist alike. For many successive years he took the chair at the Annual Wesleyan Missionary Meeting, at their small chapel in Pleasant-place—now Paragon-road. He was as gentlemanly as he was pious and highly cultured. His father, the Rev. George Burder, the author of village sermons, lived the latter part of his life in the Grove Hackney, and I believe died there. The house was subsequently the residence of a Mr. Devitt—founder of the firm of Devitt and Moore, the great Australian shippers.[26]

The next house, now the headquarters of an Essex Volunteer Regiment, has a most interesting history attached to it, involving as it does the life and life service of almost only one man, John Allen, Esq., of scholastic celebrity, who died in 1839 in his 68th year. He was born at Truro, and educated at its renowned school under the late Dr. Cardeux. Here he became head boy and secured an exhibition for Exeter College, Oxford. But his father's objections to some of the tenets of the Church of England caused him to prohibit his son's acceptance of it ; it consequently passed to the next scholar, who subsequently became master of Exeter College. Coming to Hackney, with his wife and family in 1817, he took a small house opposite, and in the first week secured 15 scholars.[27]

One cannot but say here that however celebrated our village had been as "a place of schools," the school master must have been very much abroad just then. In 1821 he was obliged to take larger premises, and moved to the house under review, which he named "Madras House," as descriptive of the method of education therein introduced, *i.e.*, "the Madras system" otherwise the "preposite," or in plain English, education aided by monitors (pupil teachers), the elder boys doing duty as masters over the younger boys, a method since very largely followed in all good schools. So notorious did this system of education become that the school was visited by several eminent scholars to see its practical working. Among them was the celebrated Rev. Dr. Irving in his most palmy days. At one tme there were between 140 and 150 boys in the school. Among them, time and space will only permit a few to be mentioned, several members of the Hankey (bankers) family, of the Collins, of Stamford-hill, Dr. Wm. Smith,* still living (editor of the *Quarterly Review*), and his brother Dr. Philip Smith, the great lexicographer, Curwen, the author of the Tonic Sol-Fa system, George Dennis, now Sir George Dennis, the Etruscan author, hailing from Ash-grove, the Rev. Andrew and Sir Charles Reed, the Rev. J. De Kewer Williams, the Rev. C. Gamble, the Rev. Dr. Mackennal and many others.

Mr. Allen was likewise an author; he wrote a work on "Modern Judaism," a translation of Calvin's Institutes, and Superville's sermons, a history of St. Domingo, and other smaller works. He was succeeded by his son, Dr. Alexander Allen, whose genius and attainments were also well-known. Dr. Thirlwall, Bishop of St. David's, placed a nephew under his special charge, and another boy was afterwards Dr. Steere, the highly cultivated Bishop of Zanzibar, who translated considerable portions of the Bible into the Swazili language, and ascribed all his literary accomplishments to Dr. Alexander Allen; but "his sun went down ere it was yet noon," for he died at the early age of 28, in 1842. The school was well sustained by two invaluable ushers, Messrs. Ferris and Garland, the former died a few weeks ago at the ripe age of 86. Thomas Garland, Esq., is still among us in honourable retirement, almost as active and clear-headed as ever, although scoring well-nigh 93 years. May my worthy old friend live to be a hundred! Although a relic of the past he is no fossil.

Madras House passed into Mr. Garland's hands in 1842, and subsequently was carried on by Messrs. Paine and Wilson; but despite their skill the glory was departing, and other well endowed and rival schools—the Grocers' and Board schools—proved too powerful for it, and the old school closed its doors. I trust your readers will pardon this lengthened comment on one spot, but although I was not myself one of the boys there, I know several to whom its memory will be ever green, and will therefore not chide my efforts towards that end.[28]

*** Has since died, as Sir William Smith.**

CHAPTER V.

PAPERS XIII. XIV. XV.

LEAVING Madras House we pass two doors further down Mare-street, where was the dwelling of a worthy Hackney man, who lived in good style, and was the proprietor of one of the old and popular City chop houses. He had had a paralytic stroke seriously affecting the whole of one side. It so happened that after a long night with a patient, I was wearily plodding homeward one lovely summer's morning about six o'clock, and saw my neighbour's footman leaving his gate, pitcher in hand, for the "Horse and Groom" opposite, where he obtained his supply of spring water from their well for the usual morning ablution. Suddenly he stopped, evidently to receive a message spoken from an open window. As I reached the gate the man as suddenly dashed down the jug, and rushed towards the house. At the same moment I too saw my neighbour falling headlong from the second floor window, having accidentally over-balanced himself, and I raised his head to find him a corpse, from fractured skull and spine. As a strange coincidence, two years afterwards, I attended the lady I had just left in that very house, and in that self-same room from which Mr. Gillham fell.

We next reach Loddiges-terrace, built by Conrad Loddiges on the site of a most interesting old house known as Barber's Barn, or Berns, a building entirely removed before my time, but from its style, as left us in engravings, probably built about 1550-90. Dr. Robinson tells us that it was in the Elizabethan style of architecture, with pediments, bay windows, and porch entrance. It had many apartments, and was most probably in its first stages a residence of noble, if not royal personages. There seemed to be sufficiently clear evidence that it was for awhile the abode of Lady Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, and mother of Lord Darnley, who in his youth would be residing here with her, and as the extensive grounds behind it, afterwards known as Loddiges-gardens, appertained to the mansion, he would doubtless be often in them. This historical belief has been perpetuated most properly by calling the road formed through the grounds Darnley-road, which opened from Mare-street through a fertile orchard, only forty years ago covered with the finest turf. Lord Darnley became the husband of Mary, Queen of Scots; their child was James VI. of Scotland, and on the death of Queen Elizabeth, became our James I.

Barber's Barn became in 1660 the residence of John Okey, who with Oliver Cromwell, and others, tried, condemned, and signed the death warrant of Charles I. I have before me a fac-simile of the original warrant, itself of great age—perhaps 200 years old. There are fifty-nine signatures, Bradshaw is first, Oliver Cromwell third, and John Okey sixth. The style, and in many instances the beautiful writing of these signatories, manifest a coolness and determination on their part which would admit of neither mercy nor delay in effecting the capital punishment of the unfortunate and too short-sighted king. Okey, as his portrait shows us, was a man of low origin, said to have been first a drayman, and then a stoker in a brew house at Islington, a person of more bulk than brains, and more strength than wit. His aim was to extirpate the monarchy. He rose to be a colonel of dragoons and was much esteemed by Cromwell, but objected to Cromwell taking supreme power. During the Commonwealth he resided in Hackney, and his widow, by favour of the Duke of York, re-obtained possession of it, although by his attainder the estate was forfeited to the Crown. He had, ere Charles II. returned, escaped to Holland with Miles Corbet and John Barkstead; was captured by Sir George Downing with his two friends, and with them executed at Tyburn on 19th April, 1662, being hung, drawn, and quartered. His remains were, however, given up to his family, and most probably he was buried in Hackney churchyard.

I must defer a rapid sketch of Loddiges gardens, a frequent resort, by favour of the then estimable owners, Messrs. William and George

Loddiges. One of the houses in Loddiges-terrace was the abode of Edward Cook, the celebrated engraver. Some of Turner's finest paintings were put into print through his exquisite line-engraving hand. His eldest son, George Edward Cook, who married the eldest daughter of the late George Loddiges, is the equally celebrated marine painter (in oils), and some of the most artistic views on the coast of Holland are by him. I find his son following in the father's steps, showing forth three generations of talented artists, and hailing first from our Hackney village.

The detached house between the original entrance to Loddiges gardens, and the Darnley-road, was first the residence of William Loddiges, the elder of the two sons of the original Conrad Loddiges. At his death it became occupied by Conrad, the only son of George, and only nephew of William Loddiges—a man of rare endowments and wondrous parts. He lived just long enough to secure the love and respect of a wide circle of friends, and, too early for us, passed away ; but his memory is dear to many yet, and not least to myself. Richmond-terrace, formerly known as Spackman's buildings (I presume from the name of their builder), was an unpretentious row of houses—in a style when building was substantial, but painfully plain. The first house had an entrance hall 20ft. square, which came almost into what is now the centre of Darnley-road. The copper beech at the corner of this bow-fronted house is a vegetable curiosity. It was planted 35 years ago, and, while flourishing and umbrageous, never increases in size.[29]

At the end of Spackman's buildings, in Mare-street, now known as Richmond Terrace, and consisting of five houses only, were some small dwellings with shops, and then a long stage-coach yard, known as Fulham's—at the old man's death, kept, and the business carried on, by his somewhat masculine daughter, Miss Mary Fulham. This formed the corner of what was once Pleasant-place, now Paragon-road. The road only went as far as what is now Akerman's coach yard and stables and the public house. On the site of that public-house was once the residence of the George Loddiges aforementioned, probably one of the most scientific men of that day in our parish. His residence had been planned and built to his own taste. The drawing room was warmed, like the hot-houses, by steam pipes ; its walls were covered with paintings of value by great and well-known masters ; at each corner on stands (like those designed for aquaria at the present day) were cases of humming-birds, stuffed, classified, and arranged by his own hand, as nearly like to life as could be effected—birds, their nests, their eggs, and even young broods.

Of course, these tropical gems were sent him by the several naturalist collectors chartered by the Loddiges brothers, to search for and send over tropical vegetation of all and every kind; so that often a Wardian case, with rare and newly-discovered orchids, would be accompanied by the minute and delicate skins of humming birds, and all this was long before Gould, of later celebrity, brought out his still more extensive collection before the general public. A valuable microscope with extensive apparatus (of course, now inferior to the advance made in these days) was a source of constant profitable pleasure to his many friends, while a brilliant chamber organ, by the famous Father Smith, would delight the more music-loving company. George Loddiges is one whose memory will never fade while those who knew him live.

Beyond this house were, to the right, their own gardens, the public thoroughfares being foot-paths only. Of Loddiges gardens themselves I must, in few words, state that the central object was a palm house, at least forty feet high; leading out of it was a range of orchid houses in each of which the temperature was maintained at tropical heat. More temperate houses were devoted to ferns, cacti, and camellias. Their camellia house was (in those days) a wondrous sight, and generally open to their friends after service at church, or the Wesleyan Chapel in Pleasant-place, close by, on Good Friday, those plants being generally in full bloom at that time of the year. The more open grounds, comprising in all fifteen acres, had their various and rarer forms of outdoor vegetation. The rose plot was a gem, and was somewhere about where the middle of Loddiges-road now runs. It was a circular plot, with circles of the finest and most velvety grass cut up in small plots, forming segments of the circles, each filled with every variety of rose then known, and roses did bloom in Hackney sixty years ago!

These gardens brought many home and foreign notabilities to see them. The late Duke of Devonshire, and his father before him frequently came. I have seen carriages-and-four waiting at the Mare-street entrance. Chatsworth owns many plants that were reared in

Hackney, and when the leases fell in, and plants and houses had to be removed, the Crystal Palace, then just completing under the auspices and from the designs of the late Sir Joseph Paxton (an old friend of the Loddiges, and formerly head-gardener to the Duke of Devonshire, at Chatsworth) received the largest and best of the palms.

Coming back down Paragon-road we pass a small chapel. This was for many years the Wesleyan Methodist Chapel, and there worshipped many of the wealthy, both in intellect and position, among the former dwellers in Hackney. As these glimpses have reference to the manners and customs as well as the incidents of old Hackney, I trust our readers will permit me to make another digression, which shall be from places and persons to religious customs. Up to within the last fifty years evening services, except in Nonconformist chapels, were almost unknown, at any rate in our village; and another annual special service was instituted by, and, up to that time, confined to the Wesleyan Methodist body. I allude to the "watch-night service," *i.e.*, a usual full evening service, commencing about 9 p.m. of the 31st December. This lasted some two hours, then special hymns, and an address by some assistant minister, lasting up to five minutes to 12, when the whole congregation—minister and people—knelt down in silent prayer, during which the one stroke of the clock (always in each chapel, and on such occasion kept to strictly true time) announced the passing of that important epoch in all our lives, when all arose and sang the appropriate hymn, "Come, let us anew our journey pursue," as a welcome to the New Year; the service closing with a few appropriate words of congratulation, and the benediction. The service was attractive and good; people of other denominations were often found among the regular congregation.

On one occasion, compelled to leave just before the close of the service, I found a half-drunken man standing by the door, evidently attracted by the joyous singing. However, he had just found it was not the place for him then, and, turning away in apparent disgust, he thus delivered himself: "I am none of your Methodisses (sic), but a Church of England man, and no religion at all." Doubtless his opinion was legally and physically true on both points. Up to this time evening service was never adopted in the Established Church, and when, soon after this, it was proposed on the plea that domestic servants would be able to get to church, the opposition on the part of the Church authorities was unbounded, and it was suggested that such an innovation would lead to fearful results, even to the morals of those whose benefit was sought, while the absence of such a service in our cathedrals was cited as a sufficient rule for their non-adoption in our parish churches. Happily, better times have dawned upon us, and, if I mistake not, cathedrals, parish and district churches, have these, which often prove the most profitable services, and *mirabile dictu* the watch-night service has become an Episcopalian institution. If I mistake not, St. James', Clapton, took the lead in this innovation.

Maintaining, as I feel I must do, that Hackney will hold its own, as either the birth-place or domicile of many who have made their names great in the annals of philanthropy or science—such as Howard, or Priestly and others—I ought to have mentioned the fact that the good and great Rev. Dr. Andrew Reed lived and died in our midst—I mean he who had "orphanage on the brain,"—and by his "incurable propensity" made many a poor bereaved widow's heart to sing for joy. He was the originator of that glorious institution, the London Orphan Asylum, for years in Clapton, and other kindred institutions, while the Reedham Asylum for Idiots was also founded by him.

Starting again from the old "Horse and Groom," and noting the more newly-erected houses on the western side of Mare-street, I must recall to my own memory, and to that of my compeers, the view of this portion of the best residential part of the main road of our village. On the margin of the broad pathway, fronting Madras House and Loddiges-terrace, was a line of noble trees—I think limes. These on the one side matched with the elm trees still existing, on the other, forming a delightful vista of forest trees, and added much to the picturesque character of this section of the street.

Unhappily at this time other counsels prevailed on our local parochial Boards, and despite all that the Messrs. Loddiges and others of us could say, the arguments then used that the droppings from the trees wore away the public paths—that their presence increased the humidity of the atmosphere—and the decay of the falling leaves added to that, made the neighbourhood unwholesome; besides said a parish magnate (whom I will not name, for although dead and gone, I feel ashamed of him) what beauty can there be in a road-side tree even in leaf, and when bare, as in winter, it is ugly, and either aspect does not compensate for the damage to the highways, or their injury to health. Then came gas pipes along the public way; then curbing to the edges of the path—ruthlessly, and to the evident delight of my departed friend, roots were cut through, even trees on the line were dug out, and what our parochials, led on by such a vegetarian hater, could not disturb, soon fell victims to leaky gas pipes, until some forty years ago that umbrageous bordering on the east side of the road disappeared for ever.

On the opposite side the elms being within the front gardens could not be touched, and it is a pleasure to remember how to the front the Messrs. Loddiges were to adopt the same plan. Now happily wiser heads, and more well instructed officials are on our Boards, and health and beauty are proved to be enhanced to the people, and to our streets, by the free planting of forest trees.

The first house from the tavern was for years the residence of a Mr. Smart—a gentleman of fortune—and the grounds extended back to the Church-path. The house and grounds still exist unaltered, and belong to the Salvation Army. Another of the St. Thomas'-square Chapel deacons, a Mr. Tozer, had another, and a West Indian broker, Mr. B. W. Ayres, occupied a third, while the last house, now the corner of Richmond-road, was long the residence of the late Mr. Hacon, partner with the Toulmins, and one of our skilled medical men.

What is now Richmond-road formed part of his premises, carriage drive, and paddock, bounded (as the ground of the whole row of houses was) by the Church-path. That house is still occupied by a medical man - son of the former owner. Soon after the Richmond-road was formed, the Wesleyans who had long found their chapel in Pleasant-place too straight for them, secured a plot with a frontage in Richmond-road, and bordered on the west by the Church-path. Here the foundation stone of a spacious, and well built chapel was laid, by the late Thomas Farmer, Esq., on July 6, 1846.

Spacious it is, but as to beauty of design for a place of worship adapted to a style and ritual so near akin to the Church of England, the less that is said about it the better; and here, as in the case of roadside trees, better notions are prevailing, and the style of the Wesleyan Chapel at Clapton is full proof of the same. Honest criticism will not spare our noble church when I come to it.

At the north-eastern corner of Richmond-road stands the Ivy House —once a veritable verdant picture, now looking sadly the worse for wear. It may be about 120 years old, and formerly had good garden grounds with coach house and stabling attached to it. Here dwelt for some years a Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Smith. He was a large printing ink manufacturer at Old Ford, and it was his reasonable boast that the *Times* newspaper—greater in its isolated and world-wide circulation than now (because it had fewer rivals) used no other ink but his, while several of the leading publishers, from whose presses issued gems of the printing art, in all shades and styles, drew their supplies of ink from his factory. They have left a bright record behind them, not sparing their well-earned wealth to those who were in need. Mr. Smith built the two white-fronted houses next to his; in one his son-in-law, a Mr. Arnold (a publisher) resided, in the other latterly the late Mr. Pye Smith, a medical man, son of the celebrated Rev. Dr. Pye Smith, and father of eminent medical men, who survive him.

These houses are now in the occupation of the Young Men's Christian Association. The red house adjoining, now occupied by another "medico," was for some years in the occupancy of a very worthy wholesale clothier in Aldgate, a downright Saxon yeoman, who hailed from Lincolnshire. The house is remarkable as to its style of building and its position far back from the road and in the centre of its own grounds (built, I should think, before the Ivy House), with extensive outside offices which still exist. From the back of its stabling, which bordered the public path, were the gardens of the houses then known as the King's-row in the Hackney-grove. Of them there is no record of interest at the present day.

Of the Grove itself I have already written in my perambulation along the Church-path. At the corner of Paragon-road stands the veterinary forge and stables, etc., formerly belonging to Mr. Child, now in possession of Mr. Corby. Of the late Mr. Child, as a faithful, if feeble chronicler of the former dwellers in Hackney, it is impossible to write in terms too eulogistic. As a veterinary surgeon, he held the premier place; on his judgment rich and poor alike relied, and when, as he once informed me, there were thirty of his neighbours within ten minutes walk of his forge who kept their carriages and pair, he must have had no lack of practice among our "upper ten." His kindness and tenderness towards all animals—horses, asses, cats and dogs—was proverbial, and many an old lady on whose treasured pet the fearful sentence "incurable" was pronounced, had this consolation that the methods adopted, first to investigate, and then to abruptly close a life that could only be misery, were always humane. But our good neighbour shone in the religious world as eminently, not as a professor only, but an exemplification of practical piety. He was a Calvanistic Nonconformist and a leading deacon, and most efficient supporter of the Rev. Mr. Hughes, afore-named, of Trinity Chapel. Alms-houses known as the Pilgrim's Lodge, and situated in Lyme Grove, near St. Thomas's square, were built and endowed by him, while in Abney Park Cemetery he sleeps in a plot specially set apart for the members of that congregation, and surrounded by the slumbering dust of those who were his loved associates in life. Of him we may well adopt the inspired language of the ill-fated prophet Balaam—"Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his."[30]

CHAPTER VI.

(PAPERS XVI., XVII., XVIII.)

INCIDENTALLY I might here mention that in the dining room of No. 1, Richmond-terrace, was exhibited for the first time the mechanism, and a code of railway signals, the inception of the electrically predisposed brain of a Hackney boy, and which developing by time and further researches and discoveries, has resulted in the almost perfect system known as the block system, under the protection of which the North London, Great Eastern, London and Brighton, and London and North Western Railways conduct their traffic, since adopted also by nearly all the Scotch lines, and railways in Australia, and even sought after by Holy (!) Russia ; such is the railway signalling known as Tyer and Co.'s, at the Dalston Junction Works.[31]

Continuing down Paragon-road, and next door to the veterinary forge and stables, formerly occupied by Mr. Child, was a shop kept by one King, an elderly man when we were boys, which was the grand repository for marbles, tops, and other toys, with the miscellaneous literature so dear to the young. He was a real worthy in his way, meriting the wish with which a punning relative oft greeted him "O King, live for ever." His better half was the more careful trader of the two, and it was noteworthy how sharp a preliminary survey was made by the intending customer as to who should be behind the counter, husband or wife, for the former often threw a marble or two extra into the bargain, which the latter never could be brought to do.[32]

A few doors further on was, some sixty years ago, a small broker's shop, kept by a careful tradesman, John Musgrove. When last resident in our parish, in Clapton, he had his year of office as Sheriff of London and Middlesex, with his gorgeous chariot, coachman and two footmen; became Lord Mayor of London, was made baronet, and died at an advanced age leaving some £100,000 behind him. The Clothworkers' Company revere his memory for his beneficence to their liverymen. The firm founded by him, first known as Musgrove and Gadsden, has been a source of profitable business as auctioneers and surveyors to their successors, and if I mistake not the present opulent and large-hearted Sir J. Whittaker Ellis, Bart., alderman and M.P., now resident at, and renowned for his *largesse* in Richmond, Surrey, is one of them. Of such as the latter one may say *floreat in eternum.*[33]

At the back of this row of shops and houses still exist a number of mean tenements, comfortable in their way, but certainly deserving of the frequent and close supervision of the sanitary authorities, viz., Jerusalem-gardens, and Jerusalem-square. As another exemplification of the ups and downs of life, I knew two small boys whose home was in the gardens, only plasterers' labourers, but with the most steady, industrious, and God-fearing habits. They neither sought the rapid accumulation of wealth by emigration to the colonies, nor did they venture upon speculations of any kind. They stuck to their work and that was all. Each are now wealthy men with large families, having a good amount of house property to keep them. I mention no names, but feel it my duty to cite these two special cases, whom I have watched narrowly up to this moment, as an example and an encouragement to our boys of to-day—"to go and do likewise."

On this spot the minutes of the Select Vestry of 27th March, 1722, allude to the "White House," formerly called Sir Thomas Marsh's house, which was in this neighbourhood by way of Jerusalem-court from Mare-street. In the wretched absence of all attempts in bygone days to retain the memory of the exact locality of our old village worthies, we may fairly infer that the house in question was at the top of what is now called Baxter's-court, and that a portion of it (white) still exists in that spot, and was some fifty years ago inhabited by an old Hackney family named Bartlett.

From this point there is nothing noteworthy until we come to Morning-lane, formerly called Money-lane, as in Rocque's map of 1745. At the corner is a house, now a grocer's shop, kept by Laud Kennett. This was 250 years ago a public-house called the "Green Man," and by a brass token, now in the British Museum, it was kept by one John Braine in 1667. On the token is the figure of a man with a club in his right hand, and on the reverse "In Hackney, 1667, his half-penny." A portion of the original building is still extant in Morning-lane.

From the Grove to this point on the western side of the way there is nothing to note except that some of the houses bear as date of erection from 1600 to 1700. Of the "Britannia" there seems no early record. It must have been where it is a century, and, as I have before noted in my account of the Church-path, there was beside it a kind of street or roadway paved with cobble stones, where the old glass coaches used to stand. It was in a direct line from the main road to Pigwell field's-path. In Rocque's, and the earlier parish maps, Church-street commenced at London-lane, this being the dividing line between South Hackney and the northern parish of St. John-at-Hackney. More recently Morning-lane was accounted the dividing line between Mare-street and Church-street. Now all is Mare-street, Church-street, as a name, having been abolished.[34]

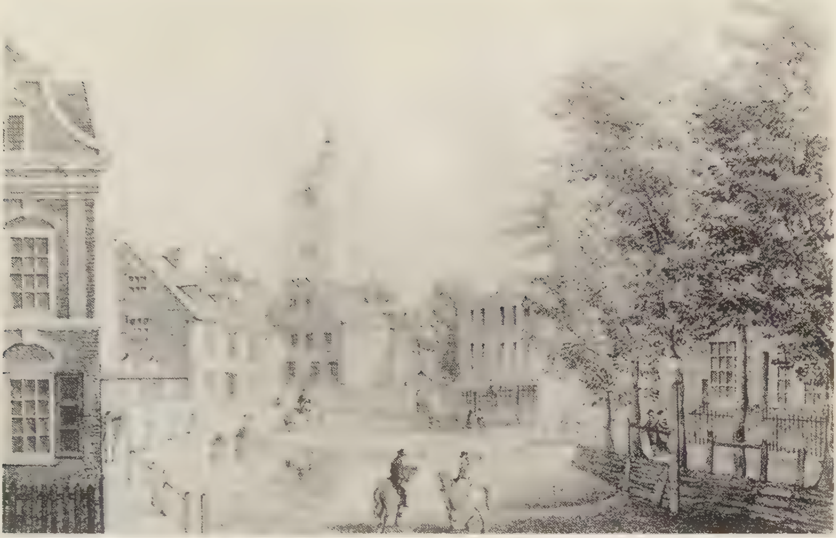
Before we pursue our course up Church-street, we will turn to the right by the old "Green Man," and take the old road known now as Morning-lane, but 150 years ago as "Money" lane. Why it was so termed the usual reticence of the ancients of Hackney leaves us without a clue; the style of the street, and what little yet remains of the old frontage lines, stamp it with antiquity; and it was without doubt (what it still is) the central road of communication with the Hamlet of Homerton; Well-street to the south, and, what is now known as Urswick-road to the north, forming the carriage ways to that interesting and once picturesque domicile of some of our wealthy parishioners.

At the date which rules the greater part of these sketches, a successful builder named Fox held as freeholder, and of some plots as leaseholder of St. Thomas' Hospital, a good deal of land about here. Mr. Fox's original residence is still on the right hand side of Morning-lane before we reach Stockmar-road. The substantial character of much of Mr. Fox's buildings sets a bright pattern to the jerry-builders of the present day, and form good models for the Government District Surveyors, who might make them their type (do they ever ?) in ensuring that the tenement to be reared and sold shall not tumble to pieces long before the half of the 99 years lease shall have transpired. Ugly, frightfully ugly, may have been the domestic architecture of the Georgian era, but those houses were built for more than one generation (30 years). The surroundings on the right hand, behind the street line, were gardens, fruitful orchards, and paddocks.

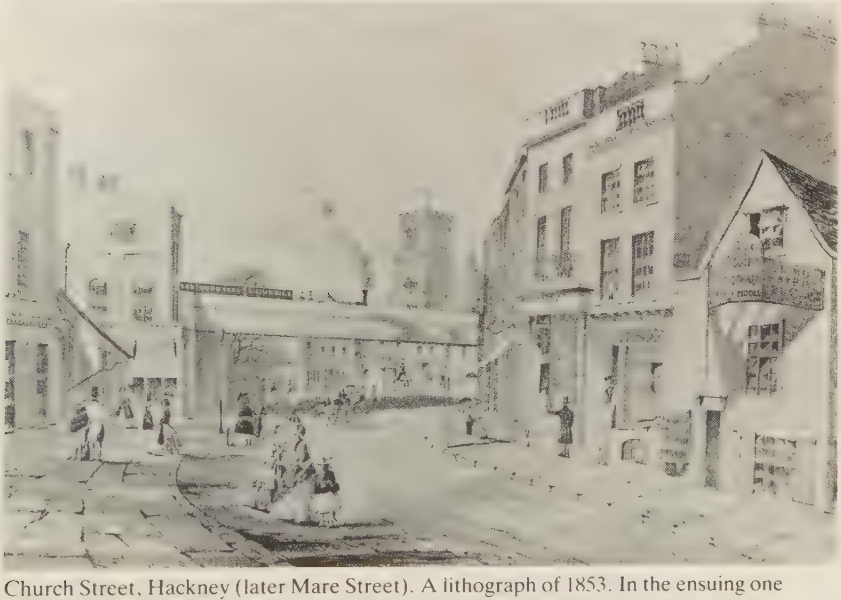
Beyond what is now Stockmar-road still stand a row of primitive dwellings, only on the ground level, no upper stories, no stairs. There they stand a simple, a charming reminder of Hackney one hundred years ago, and fronted by gardens, for the most part beautifully kept, and during this exceptional rainless summer exhibiting a wealth of floral colouring which is as creditable to the cultivator (*i.e.*, the cottager) as to the rich quality of the soil.

We pass on to Chatham-place, formerly a country lane leading to and through Paradise Fields to Well-street and South Hackney. As we turn along it we face on the left hand side the old Gravel Pit Chapel. A clue to the name it bears is at once found in the following extract from the old Hackney Vestry minutes: "17 Oct., 1719. Application for land from St. Thomas' Hospital to dig ballast therefrom," and this spot was known as the Gravel Pit field. The old chapel was built in 1715, and no doubt the Vestry item of 1719 refers to the land adjacent where the large Board School now stands. The first minister was the Rev. G. Smith, M.A., who died in 1746 and was buried in Hackney churchyard. Copies of his funeral sermon, preached by the Rev. Dr. Chandler, are still extant. He was followed by the Rev. Dr. Price (the great calculator) who died in 1791. To him succeeded the Rev. Dr. Priestly, an eminent chemist ; he was great, but far from judicious in his works on history, criticism and metaphysics ; his views were eminently Unitarian. He retired, and died in Philadelphia, America, in 1804. The Rev. W. Belsham was for a while his successor, followed by the Rev. Robert Aspland.[35]

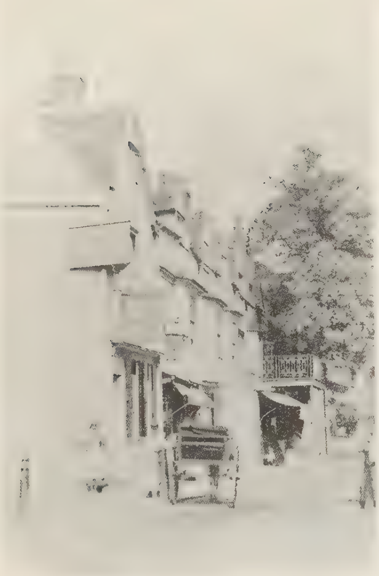
In 1810 the new Gravel Pit Chapel was built, to which the congregation with their minister removed. On its foundation stone the



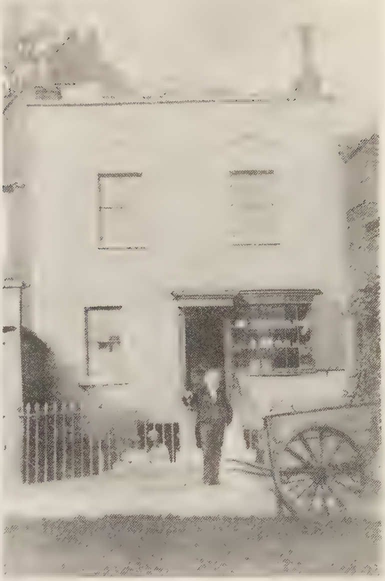
Church Street, Hackney (later Mare Street). An aquatint of 1791 but showing the street as it appeared in about 1750 with the open course of Hackney Brook and the raised footway and bridges. (HAD P12028)



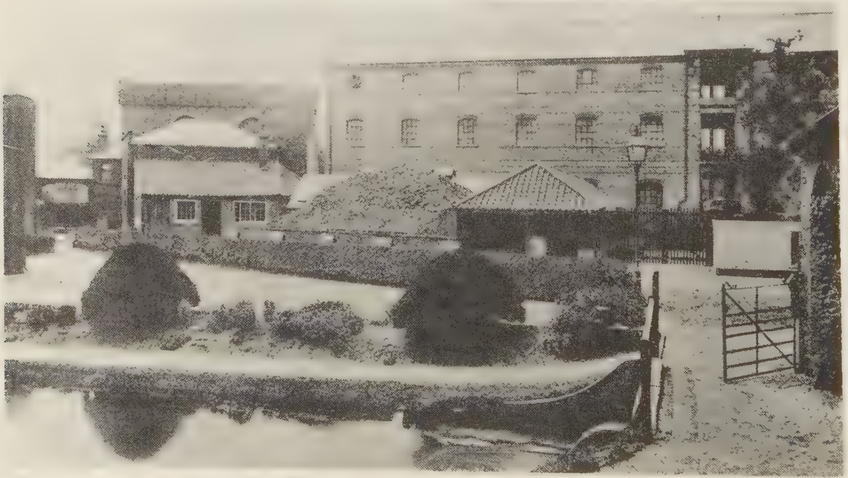
Church Street, Hackney (later Mare Street). A lithograph of 1853. In the ensuing one hundred years from the previous view a new church has been built, Hackney Brook culverted in, and the North London Railway has cut across the village street.
The artist is C. J. Greenwood. (HAD WP4462)



The Plough public house and adjoining buildings. Photograph looking east along Homerton High Street from junction with Plough Lane (now Furrow Lane) about 1870. (HAD P935)



J. R. Ashby and his staff outside his baker's shop, no 127 Well Street, about 1865. (HAD P10485)



The warehouse and ornamental water, Lewis Berger & Sons colour and paint works, Homerton. Photograph taken from the back garden of the original family home that fronted on to Shepherd's Lane. The warehouse was built over part of the course of Hackney Brook. About 1865.

following inscription declares the type of their faith: "Sacred to one God, the Father." Mr. Aspland was a popular preacher, and the congregation was large and wealthy. On more than one Sunday morning fifty years ago I counted 23 carriages waiting for the worshippers, to take them home. An independent congregation was formed on the death of the Rev. John Eyre, minister of Ram's Chapel in 1803, which worshipped for some years under the Rev. Dr. Pye Smith, at Homerton College. When the Unitarians left in 1811, they came to the old Gravel Pit Chapel, and it has been with that section of Nonconformists ever since (I quote from Dr. Robinson's work on Hackney). At the death of Dr. Pye Smith the Rev. J. Davies succeeded, and on his retirement our old friend (whom God long preserve), the Rev. J. de Kewer Williams, who is also retiring.

Crossing the road (Morning-lane) at this point, all to be seen now are tenements of an inferior sort backed by the North London Railway, which, in its course through the centre and most picturesque part of old Hackney, runs by an over bridge and viaduct to its thorough disfigurement. I am not a parish official, but had I been in the days when that railway was seeking its Parliamentary powers, I should have felt disgraced beyond measure for my laxity in not striving my utmost to compel this "line" (which is an acknowledged convenience) to burrow under ground, and by a cutting have preserved as much as possible "Hackney as it was" to us.

Let me revive the landscape first of 250 years ago, and then as I remember it. We look then from Morning-lane northward on the valley of Hackney Brook; after it has crossed Mare-street (or then Church-street); unbridged it meanders through the gardens of the houses in the main road, to be talked of presently, thence traverses the ground of the Black and White house, built in 1578, also of the mansion once occupied by Thomas Sutton, founder, or rather enlarger, of the Charterhouse. Across the meadows through which it passes is a pathway leading northward from Chatham-place to the churchyard, now the Churchwell-path. It supplies on the left a small piece of water, where the tram stables now stand, and on the right a miniature lake of good size extending along the bottom of the gardens of the houses now forming the south side of Sutton-place, and there we must leave the once pretty, purling stream, still known, although now the high-level sewer, as Hackney Brook. Secondly, in my own time, the ground is still open, a kind of field, or waste enclosed, is to the right of the Churchwell-path. While coming back towards Church-street, there stood Church Field house (Georgian era) in its own grounds, then a series of watercress (*Nasturtium Officinale*) beds, supplied by the running stream of Hackney Brook, partially diverted into it. It is said that while watercresses are indigenous, and found all over our land in shallow streams and ditches, they were first artificially cultivated on this spot. Garden grounds filled up the remaining space until we come to the backs of the constricted gardens of the houses in the main street. The small triangle has always, in my memory, been where we still find it ; and one or two of the houses in the main road nearest to the railway bridge had rather more extensive premises behind them.[36]

Between forty and fifty years ago a most worthy fellow-parishioner—a Mr. Hayward—who followed the special calling of the first Adam, occupied a tenement on, and cultivated a portion of the watercress grounds. One of his children gave ocular and olfactory demonstration that the character of our brook, which once fed fish-ponds, and as a fact in former days supplied the water for the brewery in Bridge-street, Homerton, had somewhat altered in quality by effluxion of time and our civilization. Playing on the edge of one of the watercress trenches she tumbled in ; her submergence in eighteen inches of fluid would scarcely drown her, but she was nearly suffocated in the tenacious mud which received her, and which by its stench on her rescue revealed its peculiar quality. I am informed the lady has had a dread of water ever since ; is it not rather of sewage ? Needless to say the supply from the brook was cut off, as also at the brewery ; latterly the trenches were fed by the laborious pumping of water from a well.

Returning to Church-street, we pass what is still a butcher's shop, kept for many years by a Mr. Elwood ; then by a chemist (the first ever established in Hackney) a Mr. Belcher, highly esteemed among his compeers sixty years ago. Sundry other worthy tradesmen occupied the old-fashioned shops and houses farther on until we reach the "Old King's Head," cleared away for a more pretentious (can we say better looking) modern building.

Before I venture further, let me respond to an invitation in reference to certain old residents of Hackney, who are found in the list of jurors from which the jury who tried Lord George Gordon, in 1781, for high treason, was empannelled. No doubt Joseph Spackman built Richmond-terrace, formerly Spackman's-buildings, residing in the bow-fronted house at the corner of Darnley-road. The ninety-nine years' lease from St. Thomas' Hospital (a lease due to the builder) fell in about 1850, and the character of Joseph Spackman corresponds as to date and position. Of Gatfield, Mackey, Pickles, and Pit, I know nothing, but Thomas Flight lived at an old house (now No. 202, Mare-street) opposite the "Horse and Groom"; I knew his daughter, Miss Flight (quite an old lady fifty years ago). A descendant, probably the son of Marmaduke Peacock, lived at 180, Mare-street, now Mr. Shaw's, veterinary surgeon. His widow married a Mons. Cellier, and one of her children was the late A. Cellier, the lamented author of the popular play, "Dorothy." An old resident, and very respectable baker in Clapton, the late Mr. Paul, may have been a descendant of Nathaniel Paul.

To resume, the houses on the western side of Mare-street, from opposite Morning-lane, (where not more recently rebuilt) are of the earliest Georgian Type. I call to mind the name of Holwell, a baker; of Steib, the ladies' favourite shoemaker; of Pope, one of the oldest surviving shopkeepers, at any rate in family and name (for I never remember Hackney without a Pope, although the treasured home of Nonconformity); of Grout, succeeded by Giffen, the saddler of the village; and then passing the "Cock Tavern," we had at the opposite corner of Sylvester-row a builder—now a pawnbroker's—then the cornchandler's, a very old business; and next to that stood somewhat back from the road, having a grass court with iron railings before it, a good old house with double front (*tempus*, William and Mary), where for some years dwelt a Mr. Hare, surgeon, who was parish doctor for the *whole parish*. Graham-road is a modern innovation. Next to that spot was the shop of Messrs. Slatterie and Green linendrapers, (now Messrs. Branscombe's) and where the pier of the North London Railway bridge now stands were two antiquated little shops: Dove, a hatter, and Bindby, the Hackney bun shop; the last not only an enjoyable resort for the good folks of Hackney, young and old. but a pleasing *rendezvous* for those who, even in those days, were bent on a day's outing; from this very spot all the Hackney stage coaches started, and, if there were more than two or three on pleasure bent, it would not do to risk not finding room enough as the coach passed your door, and hence the necessity of securing seats at the starting point; and even fifty years ago the morning stage coaches to the city, and evening from the same, were pretty well filled by their regular booked passengers.

At this spot was a pretty park-like enclosure; a villa residence to which it belonged stood somewhere about where the end of Messrs. Rose's shops stand in Amherst-road. The Hackney brook skirted it, and immediately behind, and from north to south, were situate the pleasure grounds of the "Mermaid Tavern." This villa, beautifully built—many of the doors were of solid mahogany—was for a while the residence of Mr. Nelme, a gentleman of independent means, and much esteemed; when carrying on some chemical experiments an explosion occurred, and he lost one arm. He was eventually the subject of a fearful tragedy. A grandson, only a school-boy, who had heard that he was heir-at-law, and that on the death of his grandfather he would come into his property through his mother, Mr. Nelme's daughter, mixed arsenic with the sugar he was taking with some strawberries, and caused his death. The boy was tried for wilful murder, and condemmed to death; sentence was commuted because of his youth, and penal servitude for life was the actual punishment. He ended his wretched life in New Zealand.[36a]

Another tragedy is associated with that villa, connected with one of our cholera epidemics, and reflecting small credit on the then poor law authorities of Islington, who by the way, seem to have gone wrong on a case of the same disease with the parish of Paddington at this moment. But I now refer to 1847, I think. The Islington parish farmed their boys at a school-house in Tooting; the epidemic came and found the poor little fellows living over and surrounded by the vilest drainage; it proved a very plague pit, and they fell like rotten sheep. Of course their removal was imperative; and suddenly, and with but scant, if any notice, we Hackney people found the children (that is all who could be removed) shot down in our midst in this very villa. The shift from Tooting, and the more salubrious air of our village, with prompt and energetic treatment, soon worked a change; and although some died there, and many were affected (even the parish doctor sent in charge from Islington well-nigh succumbing) the poor children soon had a clean bill of health.

The Islington Guardians showed their appreciation of the unwearied and risky services of the Hackney doctor (whom they were compelled to call in when their own officer fell ill), by paying him but small remuneration for the work done, and appointing another Hackney medical man to look after the children, then restored to health, until they could be removed to a suitable premises elsewhere. As he received a special vote of thanks for his services, the consistency of their own action may be considered on a par with some other peculiarities of their conduct, which from time to come to light.

Turning back to the "King's Head," which (I mean the old building) must have been Elizabethan, we had next to it the oldest and only fishmonger then in Hackney, a Mr. Starkey. Next that was a pastry-cook, appropriately named Tuck, subsequently a Mr. Long. All the old landmarks have disappeared from this side of the street. As we passed along, the pathway was originally much higher than the road itself, and protected by wooden posts and railings—just where the east pier of the railway bridge stands—and here were two shops, one a shoemaker's named Barnard, the other a cabinetmaker's, Harvey's; the raised pathway was a reminder of the time when the brook, unbridged as far as the carriage-way was concerned, flowed across the road, the foot passengers passing on either side by light-foot bridges. It was no infrequent event after heavy storms, or rapid thaws in the winter, for the road to be impassable for low vehicles and gentlemen on horse-back. An aged relative, long passed away, told me many a tale of like kind. He lived in Clapton, and kept his saddle-horse, but was always prepared on such occasions to turn back with his horse, and if unable to find a seat in the stage coach, which started from the south side of the brook, make his way to Lloyd's, Royal Exchange, on foot.

Before I close this paper, let me wander back in memory to the view, say from the terminus of the church path in Church-street, before the hideous railway bridge shut out the sight. From that point the quaint old houses on either side leading up to the old church tower itself—standing out, despite the no less ugly old Town Hall, amongst the loftier trees of the church-yard, and the more distant steeple of the present parish church—made a picturesque view of Hackney, as it was, well worthy of its record on canvas.

CHAPTER VII.

(Papers xix., xx., xxi.)

CROSSING the brook by the raised pathway, with posts and rails painted white, we enter the rectory manor, otherwise called (but why, I know not) "Grumbolds." Two shops and houses still stand on our right—probably 150 years old—and then in days gone by, say up to 1790, there was a field pathway skirting the old churchyard and an ancient mansion known as the Black and White House, where the tram stables now stand. The name thus given was derived from the older portion, built about 1570, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, by a London citizen, which had been subsequently added to by Sir Thomas Vyner in the reign of Charles II. (about 1660); and the old and new were black, or dark coloured, and white.[37]

I am quoting from Dr. Robinson's History in stating that in the large window of the drawing room were the arms of James I., Charles I., the Elector Palatine, and the Duke of Holstein, brother of Anne of Denmark, and the arms of the Prince Palatine of the Rhine impaling those of his consort, the Princess Elizabeth, daughter of James I. There were also the arms of Sir Thomas Vyner. He was the son of Sir Robert Vyner, a Lord Mayor of London, whose strong attachment to Charles II. caused the latter to be his guest, and to join fully in the conviviality of his Lord Mayor's Day feast. Referring again to its earlier history, there seems every probability that the Princess Elizabeth and her husband had here for awhile their home, and report has said that the obelisk-shaped tomb near the rectory, in the old churchyard, was hers, although she was buried in Henry VII's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, and in Lyson's

" Environs," he states that the inscripton on the obelisk, which is now utterly lost, was "Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Foster, 1727."

At the age of sixteen, the Princess Elizabeth, a light-hearted girl, was married at Whitehall to Frederick, the Elector Palatine, on the 14th February, 1613. Personally, their union was a happy one in their mutual affection, but, induced in 1619 to accept the crown of Bohemia from a brave, injured, and oppressed people, whom he sought in every way to aid, he had to yield to the superior power of Austria ; his father-in-law, our King James, who was ever averse to war, failing to render him efficient aid. He lost his kingdom, and even his own dominions, and after many difficulties and hardships, died on the 20th of November, 1632. In one of his loving letters to his faithful wife he writes :—" Would to God that we had a little corner of the world in which we could live quietly and contentedly together ! That is all the happiness I wish for." It, therefore, seems more than probable that, so far, his wish might have been gratified ; and what spot could be sweeter and more retired than this umbrageous nook in our once pretty village ? They were also sound Protestants, and here, under the shadow of the old Church, religious, as well as social influences, might have been doubly felt.

Our Queen of Bohemia appears to have been a most estimable woman, bearing her troubles, even poverty and distress, with dignified magnanimity, and so much was she loved in the Netherlands, or the low countries (as they were then called), that the people gave her the title of " Queen of Hearts." Here then we have every reason to believe she dwelt, and probably passed away, but I cannot quit our royal heroine without setting forth what to us must be a striking and deeply interesting fact.

The King and Queen of Bohemia had twelve children — seven sons and five daughters. The last, Sophia, was born in 1630. In 1658, she married Ernest Augustus, who became Duke of Hanover in 1679, and Elector in 1692. Her eldest son, George Louis, became Elector of Hanover in 1698. The Princess Sophia was in her 70th year when the question of the Protestant Succession for the Throne of England was raised and determined. The son of the deceased James II was a Roman Catholic. Therefore on the death of Queen Anne, the last surviving daughter of James II, and sister to Queen Mary, co-Sovereign with William—(William and Mary)—on the 1st August 1714, George Louis, Elector of Hanover, son of Sophia, and Grandson of Princess Elizabeth, was called to the Throne of these kingdoms as our George I. Thus the beloved, yet deeply afflicted princess, our once neighbour, is the golden link between the former line of our sovereigns, and of the present House of Brunswick, our much-loved and gracious Queen. "God save our Queen." *

Before we quit this spot, may the writer, (who thanks God for a constitutional monarchy, and, above all, for our present Queen) make a still further digression? The Halls of Westminster, St. James', Buckingham, Kensington, and Hampton Court Palaces, may take their several notable positions in our country's history as the birthplace or residence of sovereigns, but to my mind to none can so much importance be attached as to our village, in this historical fact, that here was found for a while that deeply interesting royal lady through whom the succession was prolonged and established of a line which has, for its chief insignia, the Bible, the Sceptre, and the Crown. Yet more, let me add for the information of the distracted and unquiet in Ireland. Our Queen's pedigree can be traced back to King Kenneth II, of Scotland, A.D. 854, and to King

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* Hackney having been at this period the stronghold of Nonconformity, the following incident in our country's history may be of interest. At the old Nonconformist Chapel in Fetter Lane, which is about to be pulled down, ministered the Rev. Mr. Bradbury, a man whose out-spoken language on all occasions caused our Queen Anne herself to nickname him "bold Bradbury," and so defiant was his conduct that the mob in a politico-religious riot burnt down his former chapel, and it was suggested that he should be made a bishop to silence him. On a Sunday morning, 1st August, 1714, our Queen Anne, youngest daughter of James II., and last of the Stuart family who sat on the throne, (although only in her 50th year) was dying from an apoplectic seizure. Bishop Burnett, who lived in Clerkenwell, was on his way to minister to his dying Sovereign, when he met Mr. Bradbury going to the morning service at the Fetter Lane Chapel. He told him of the Queen's condition, and at his request promised to send him word at once of the Queen's death. This the Bishop did, and by a preconcerted signal "the dropping of a handkerchief from the gallery," Bradbury was apprised of the fact, and in his concluding prayer announced the death of the Queen to his congregation, and the accession of George the first, by praying for the Divine blessing upon "George," King of Great Britain and Ireland. Thus closed a Dynasty which was rapidly bringing us down both politically, and commercially, while Hogarth's paintings (only too truthful and out-spoken) set before us our then moral and social degradation, and thus was ushered in the Hanoverian Dynasty and the Protestant succession.

Feargus Moore, of Argyleshire, A.D. 487. He came from Ireland, and his ancestors, through a long line of Irish kings, date back to B.C. 580, by a more or less ascertained chain of descent, until we arrive at Heremon, King of Ireland, who is said to have married Tea-Tephi, an Eastern and Hebrew princess, daughter of a King of Judah (query Zedekiah), and whose burial place is under the Mound of Tara in Ireland. ("The harp that once in Tara's Halls.") However, let my Irish friends clearly understand that ours—the Saxon race—is ruled over by a sovereign of Irish descent, and not the Irish by a Saxon Queen.

The lease of the Black and White House came into a family named Ryder. They, in 1796, granted it to Messrs. Buck, Page, and Woodward, who in 1796, pulled down the old mansion, and built Bohemia-place with its materials. Formerly, a dog or some such animal in stone was fixed on the parapet of each house at the corner of Bohemia-place, but these have disappeared. It is said they were originally on either side of the entrance of the old mansion. Two shops and somewhat old houses bring us to the Old Church Yard. The house at the corner (known as the Beehive) was for many years the residence of a grocer, named Dennis, a most worthy and popular Hackney man, very much mixed up with parish affairs, and an uncompromising Whig. We come next to the Old Church House—now the old Town Hall—the noteworthy Tower, and the Rowe Chapel, sole remainders of the Old Church itself, ruthlessly and unnecessarily pulled down; not to make way for another on the same site, there would have been some reason in that, but removed to another place still within the boundaries of what is now our Hackney Churchyard. Of this it may be said that its style and plantation-like character is a fair type and pattern of the many cemeteries which now surround our great metropolis.[38]

Before I close this paper and touch upon the history of our old demolished Fane, it would not be out of place to give the names of some of those celebrities who dwelt in old Hackney, worshipped within its walls, and of whom several now lie among its many dead. Among them we have Cardinal Gauselinus, vicar 1320, David Dolbein, Bishop of Bangor, Gilbert Sheldon, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury, the Rev, John Strype, compiler of Stowe's last edition of London, 1598—1633, who was lecturer at Hackney Church for 36 years, and died 1737, aged 94; Thomas Sutton, founder of the Charterhouse, Sir Henry Rowe, Sir Robert Dycer, Sir Thomas Player, Lord Brooke, Rev. Wm. Spurstowe (founder of the Spurstowe Charity), Sir Thomas Vyner, Sir George Vyner, Sir Stephen White, Sir Thomas Marsh, Sir Hugh Middleton, Gilbert, Earl of Clare (born at Clapton), Sir William Hicks, Sir Thomas Cooke, Wood, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, Francis Tyssen, Sir John Cass, Lady Wills, Lord Zouch, Sir Daniel Holms, Sir Henry Thorold, John Howard, Daniel Powell, Henry Norris, Thomas Blackmore, senr. and junr., George Clarke, Thomas Flanders, and Stephen Ram. These are but a few of the many who dwelt here, and the knowledge of whose dwellings, as well as of their doings, would have come down to us but for the apathy of our former fellow-townsmen.

I should have added the names of a few more of our old nobility, who, when the Tower of London and the East End were the seat of the Court, made Hackney their home. Among them were the Earl of Northumberland, the Earls of Oxford and Westmoreland, Lord Hunsdon, Lord Vaux, Lady Latimer, and Margaret Douglas, Countess of Lennox, mother of Lord Darnley, and grandmother of our James I. Also Sir Ralph Sadler, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and Sir John Heron. Some were buried in the old church itself, others in the churchyard.

Turning our backs on that eye-sore, the Old Town Hall, and slowly pursuing our way eastward, how grandly the grey old Tower rises above us, standing in its strength, as it has done for at least 600 years, and with ordinary care likely to stand as many more. The records of its earlier history, as we have too often found in this our old village, are *nil*, and but for the knowledge that first the Knight-Templars about A.D. 1150, and subsequently the Knights-Hospitallers, who succeeded them, lived and held estates in Hackney, and would, of course found and sustain a church, its first erection must be considered as lost in the mist of ages. Archæologists may naturally say, if records be lost, are there no memorials in stone ? The old church has not shared the fate of many an interesting old building, destruction by fire, which in its intensity, causes even the hardest granite to crumble, and surely some memorials graven in stone must be somewhere.

Well, with shame I must confess such was the apathy and indifference of my fellow townsmen only two generations—sixty years—ago, that that very churchyard path along which I am mentally wandering, was curbed with marbles as beautiful in their variegated colouring as they were valuable in their past associations, which had been ruthlessly torn from their tombs, memorials, and probably from the altar itself, in our venerable old church ; and no mark, no token left us from whence they came ; while many were carefully broken up to form a better foundation for the pathways. As far as can be gathered from prints, and very meagre descriptions, the old church was rebuilt, or probably repaired only, as in the early English style ; was at first dedicated to St. Augustine—not the emissary from Rome who landed with certain missionary companions in the Isle of Thanet, Kent—but Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, A. D. 395. After the Restoration (*temp*. Charles II.) it was called after St. John the Baptist, its present titular saint. In the year 1292, being the twentieth year of Edward I., the church was valued at fifty marks, the vicarage at twelve marks. Hackney was a rectory and vicarage belonging from the earliest times to the Bishops of London. Cardinal Gauselinus was rector from 1328 to 1334. Later on Arthur Wood was instituted to the living in 1509. Christopher Urswick (Urswyk) who had a large share in rebuilding the church, was his successor, and died and was buried in the old church, Oct. 24th, 1521. He was an eminent statesman, almoner to Henry VII., and by bringing about the marriage of that King with Elizabeth of York, Jan. 18th, 1485, united the houses of York and Lancaster, and for ever closed the controversy and civil wars of the Red and White Roses. This special act of Urswick, as one of our fellow townsmen, and whose ashes mingle with our kindred dust, deserves more than a passing notice. Despite all the intensity of the factious spirit of his times, when even blood was accounted of less value than water, Urswick thoroughly accomplished his object, and like our modern hero (for a time a Hackney school-boy) Lord Beaconsfield, he came off victoriously, effecting " Peace with honour."[39]

So Hackney may be proud of her rector—old Urswick. He was buried within the old communion rails of the old church, and his tomb, in capital preservation, is now in the present church. In Richard III., act iv., scene 5, of Shakespeare, his name is introduced. The old church walls were covered and adorned with marbles and brasses, the list of which is given by old John Strype in his edition of Stow's London, A.D. 1720.

The Rev. John Strype, who was likewise vicar of Low Leyton, was lecturer at Hackney Church from 1689 to 1724, and died at Hackney in his 94th year. Coming down to my times the Rev. Archdeacon Watson, D.D., was rector; an excellent man and a cleric of the old school. To him succeeded the Rev. Thos. Oliver Goodchild, whose hearty, sprightly manner is still familiar to many of the present day; the Rev. Arthur Brook retiring from ill-health, and now our not less esteemed minister and rector, the Rev. F. Evelyn Gardiner, brings this part of our history to the present day.

Coming back to the re-building, or more correctly repairing and adding to our church, we are again confronted with Urswick (who meanwhile had been made Dean of Windsor and Archdeacon of Richmond, Yorks, but refused a Bishopric); he was associated with Sir John Heron, master of the Jewel House to Henry VIII. in this work. Hence the arms of Heron were said to be on every pillar, and his memory was perpetuated by the old public house, exactly opposite, known as the "Three Cranes," but now swept away, which it was said was built for the men employed at the church.

The original parish church was probably built about A.D. 1250. The tower was at the south-west corner of the church, it may have been built about 1300, by the knights of St. John of Jerusalem, it had a turret with a weather-cock at one corner; from its massive proportions it may have been designed for a strong-hold in case of need. The western door and porch were on the north side, entering into the church by a central doorway. The length of the nave was 62 feet by 24 feet; on either side of the chancel was a chapel. The chancel and nave were rebuilt about 1519, and in 1614 the Rowe chapel was built on the south side of the enlarged high chancel, while the Vestry occupied the corresponding side north of the chancel. About this latter date galleries were erected, and the church greatly beautified and decorated, the organ gallery being very handsome. I must refer my readers to the admirable compilation by Mr. R. Simpson in which will be found a detailed account of many of the marble tombs, effigies and brasses with which the place abounded. The Rev. J. W. Kenworthy, formerly a curate at Hackney church, has added an interesting page to Mr. Simpson's book, and by the gravestones in the old churchyard, clearly marks out the boundaries of the church itself; the Iconoclasts (as I cannot but term them) having taken every possible care to obliterate the lines of the old foundations. Happily the Tower and the Rowe chapel were the property of others, so they could not touch them.[40]

Near the centre of the north side of the church stood, and may still be seen, "the parish vault," in which those who could not afford a separate vault might be buried; of course at four times the cost of interment in the churchyard. The church had three doors, chancel door north-east, the nave porch due west, and a porch in the south. The Rowe Chapel, now the property of the Marquis of Downshire, was built for interments, as well as for a chapel, forming part of the church. The building itself, and that portion of the old church forming the high chancel was enclosed with iron railings. The slab stones within still show the time-worn footmarks of the ancient communicants, and here lie the remains of the old rector Urswick. Other interments have been Mary Stewart, Countess of Granard, Oct. 11, 1758, Richard Newcome (son of Peter Newcome, vicar of Hackney), Bishop of St. Asaph, June 10, 1769, Francis James Leslie, Lord Lindores, 4 July, 1775, and Edward de Vere, 17th Earl of Oxford, 6, July, 1604. Of its rectors and vicars we have the Rev. Peter Newcome, the Rev. Wm. Spurstowe, D.D., founder of Spurstowe's Charity, Rev. Hugh Johnson, Rev. Dr. David Doulben, afterwards Bishop of Bangor, and Gilbert Sheldon, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury.

If my readers will enter the present church by its west door, and turn to the right, they will see one of the old tombs—that of Lady Latimer—which with great care, and at much cost, has been re-erected in the north-west vestibule. The Baroness Burdett Coutts, a lineal descendant, has restored the monument, which is well worth a visit. What remained of the original tomb had been stowed away in the old tower, and when that was cleared out for a mortuary (another desecration happily ended), the disjointed pieces were put into the Rowe chapel, from thence by my old friend's (Mr. R. Simpson's) zeal, the restoration has been effected. The low wall which separates the old from the new churchyard was probably built in 1707.

Before I quite leave the old church I would refer my readers to that notable work, "Stow's London," first brought out by John Stow, A.D. 1598. He deserves a passing notice; although not of Hackney, he must have been a most diligent observer and chronicler of the place, especially of the old church. Stow was born A.D. 1525; his father was a tailor in Cornhill, and to that trade he was bound; but he tells us, "that seeing the confused order of our late English chronicles, and the ignorant handling of ancient affairs, leaving mine own peculiar gains, I consecrated myself to the search of our famous antiquities." Thus he wrote in 1575, having ten years before entered upon this deeply interesting field of labour—assisted by Archbishop Parker—instead of the fitting reward which in these days he might have secured, he was so reduced, almost to beggary, that in his 79th year he received letters patent from James I. to become a mendicant, *i.e.* (so runs the deed), "to collect amongst our loving subjects their voluntary contributions, and kind gratuities." He died in 1605, and was buried in St. Andrew's, Undershaft (now the living of our Bishops of Bedford), where his monument in terra cotta may still be seen.

In 1633 another and augmented edition of the "Stow's London" was published, and in 1720 the Rev. John Strype (30 years lecturer at Hackney Church and vicar of Leyton) revised, added to, and published another edition, which is now before me in two large folio volumes. His list of the monuments in old Hackney Church is very complete, and deeply interesting. He tells us that a church was evidently in existence in the time of Edward I., A.D. 1290, and that in the reign of Edward III., A.D. 1352, the Rectory and Vicarage of Hackney were at the request of Randulph, Bishop of London, handed over to the Precentor of St. Paul's in place of that of Stortford (? Bishop Stortford) in Essex, the value of which was not sufficient. Among the many monuments, some of which I have already named, was, in the body of the chancel, "a fair, black marble," on which was this inscription (in Latin, but I translate): "Here lies Joannes Ivat, de London, merchant, second son of William Ivat, of this parish, gentleman who died 23 February, 1693, *æt* 44, &c., &c. It is an interesting fact that a very zealous and intelligent archæologist, bearing the same name, resides amongst us in South Hackney, and is closely associated with the London and Middlesex Archæological Society.[41]

CHAPTER VIII.

(PAPERS XXII., XXIII. AND XXIV.)

WANDERING up the old church aisle we are in the immediate neighbourhood of the Rowe Chapel at its south-east corner, at the entrance to which lie the remains of George Clarke, died 14th August, 1686. And who may enter the jealously guarded precincts of this mortuary chamber, built by Sir Henry Rowe in 1614, and originally lighted by a lantern in the roof, which was subsequently removed? Some few years ago our then sextoness, Miss Goodwin, was conducting two gentlemen from Leeds into this chapel, who were seeking the Thoresby monument, when a dilapidated arch gave way, and Miss Goodwin was killed on the spot, December, 1877. Since then the structure has been repaired by Lord Arthur Hill, the freehold belonging to the Marquis of Downshire.

Sir Henry, who was son of Sir Thomas Rowe, died 12th November, 1612. Sir Thomas married the eldest sister of Sir Thomas Gresham, founder of the first Royal Exchange. Another of the family, Owen Rowe, was one of the signatories of the warrant for the execution of Charles I. He was sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, died in the Tower of London, and was buried here on December 27th, 1661. Trevor Hill, afterwards Viscount Hillsborough, married Mary, the eldest daughter and co-heir to Anthony Rowe; their two sons, who died young, and a grandson, Marcus, Viscount Kilwarlin, are buried here.

The then Lord Hillsborough was made Marquis of Downshire in 1789, and hence the present ownership.

If from these feeble efforts at recalling the past some stimulus were given to those of my fellow parishioners who have the influence and the power to approach fittingly the present Marquis of Downshire, how deeply interesting might the revelations prove of this too long darkened sepulchral chamber; for I have an impression that other and more interesting relics (neither of the Rowes, nor of the Tyssens), dragged from the old church walls, thence to the old tower, and subsequently removed somewhere, may after all be in this chapel, and ought to be brought to light. Will no one help me? As I like my readers to be able, as much as possible, to follow me, I am given to understand that the large table tomb of red brick with a massive stone slab on the side of the church path by the rectory has on it the date 1740, and a very dilapidated stone slab just above ground to the west of that vault is the old parish vault.* A reference to this vault occurs in the Vestry minutes of June 1, 1741:—

> A Mrs. Elizabeth Carter applies for the pew over the parish vault, and offers at her own cost to break a doorway out of the church through the wall, and the Vestry granted it provided she obtained a faculty, and so laid the floor of the pew that a corpse might be readily put down into the vault under it.

Before I quit this interesting spot I ought to bring before my readers one who, whatever his views from time to time have been, proved a great benefactor to our parish. I allude to the Rev. Dr. William Spurstowe, citizen and mercer of London, who became vicar of Hackney, May 3rd, 1643. He was a preacher before the Long Parliament, and was ejected from the living in 1662 for non-conformity. He died on 23rd January, 1665. By his will six almshouses were built for six poor widows, and his benevolent scheme was carried out, and enlarged by Alderman Henry Spurstowe, his brother and heir, who himself left two fields, known as "Badbrooke's Meadows," to the same charity, surrendering the whole estate and almshouses to one George Bellum and others, as trustees, by a deed dated 22nd August, 1667. 42

The estate, as now known to us, consists of Graham, Navarino, Wilton, and Greenwood-roads, Dalston; the Hackney Downs Junction station is within it. I remember when there were fields, and (Navarino-road) a pretty country lane with banks "whereon the wild thyme grows," where I have gathered violets and wild convolvulus, and there was there also the remains of an old conduit, connected with the plant (so I was told) which carried water from the country to the conduit in Moorfields. It was latterly used as a tool house for the gardener's ground in which it stood. I may add that on the north side of Wilton-road is a long strip of garden ground (now very wild) which was laid out as such for as long as I can remember.[43]

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* See Appendix.

The objects of the charity are maintaining six poor widows in their six almshouses,* giving a quarterly dole of £4 to each of the ten widows in Bishop Wood's almshouses by Clapton Pond; giving a quarterly dole of £3 15s. to each of twenty aged female pensioners; and sending from time to time convalescent males and females to convalescent homes (chiefly to Sandgate) on which object alone above £500 yearly has been expended during the last few years. The only anomaly in this excellent charity is that the Rectories of South and West Hackney are excluded from its benefits, which are thus solely confined to residents (parishioners) of the Rectory of Hackney.

As proving tne increased value of the Spurstowe estate, it is interesting to note that the 14¼ acres of land up to A.D. 1771 were let at a yearly rental of from £25 to £26; from that day to Lady-day, 1814, the rent was forty guineas; then for the succeeding four years, £80. In 1817 the almshouses required re-building, and money was borrowed to effect that object, the land being let once more for a further term of 42 years, at £84 yearly for 21 years, and the remaining term for £112 yearly, with permission to the tenant, Richard Dann, Esq., to dig out and use the brick earth, ballast, and gravel. The almshouses were re-built in 1819. Of course the doles were in proportion to the income at the several epochs. The land has since been covered with houses built along good and wide roads, and the present income from ground rents, independently of interest on investments, is nearly £900 annually; the last total income, after a most rigid audit, being £2087 16s. 4d., as is set forth in the annual abstract of the trustees' in the parish Red Book for

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* With £26 annually and coals.

1892. What the value of the estate will be when the several leases fall in our parochial successors alone will realize.

It may be of interest to note some of the names of our former trustees. Thus: On 7th April, 1678, Sir Steven White, Dr. William Parker, and Pelatiah Barnardiston, were chosen by the Easter Vestry; on 2nd March, 1729, Henry Ashton, Henry Norris, Stamp Brooksbank, Stephen Ram, Samuel Tyssen, and René Duboyville, Esqs., were elected trustees on the surrender of William Northey and Benjamin Rokeby, Esqs.; on 1st June, 1741, the Rev. Dr. Robert Wright, James Lever, and Thomas Sikes were made trustees. Here we find names that were familiar to Hackney men sixty years ago, and some still known amongst us. While the date of the Rev. Dr. Spurstowe's death is well-known, the place of his burial on February 8th, 1665, is doubtful. 1665 was the great plague year—several died of it in Hackney, and it is surmised he did—and on that account he would scarcely be buried in the church, but, with others, be interred in the open churchyard ground. Of this scourge and its preventives we have a reminder in the Vestry minutes, dated 3rd April, 1666: "By order of the Privy Council the churchwardens are to cause a convenient quantity of unslacked lime, and also gravel or some other earth to be laid upon the graves of those that died of the plague."

Time and space compel one to leave the old church, although, like old Stow, I would fain linger on my perambulation or circuit walk (as he called his peregrinations without the city walls) to inquire and tell still more about the ancient fane, not as our interesting but garrulous chronicler Samuel Pepys (himself the son of a London tailor), who came to the church, and to Hackney to see the pretty girls from the several ladies' schools, who worshipped there, or to visit the old and renowned gardens in the parish, admire the orange trees and steal an orange.

No; there is a glamour over these sacred spots, set apart for centuries for the worship of God, whatever may have been the form and ceremonial—the joyous gatherings oft commingled with doubts and fears on the part of the older parties present, when the young and the fair were linked in the ties of holy matrimony, while the joy bells were merrily pealing overhead. The dedication of the newly-born infants at the baptismal font, amidst the smiles and well-wishes of young parents and friends ; the personal acceptance of the baptismal vow under the hands of the bishop in confirmation ; and in due course the closing scene of all, when amidst sorrowing friends, " the dust is returned to the earth as it was, and the spirit unto God who gave it," while the funeral knell booms forth the solemn fact " that in Adam all die." Mail-clad warriors, courtly dames, proud ecclesiastics, devoted ministers, the rich and the poor, the high and the lowly, age and youth, have been carried for the last time within those hallowed walls, which their feet so often entered in the days gone by, and though we can scarce trace the old foundation lines, yet we know that that particular plot in the the old churchyard is consecrated for ever.

The old Town Hall stands upon the site of the old Church House. The Church House, was the Vicarage House, built in 1520. Here Christopher Urswicke lived for the last year of his life, as he died in October, 1521. It was also the residence of the vicars— among them Dr. Spurstowe—and was afterwards used for church and parochial purposes, while for many years it served the purpose of a free school. For awhile it was again used as before, but becoming very dilapidated it was taken down in 1802, and the present building erected, This furnished a watch house, engine house, and committée and ante-rooms. In 1825 it was again altered to its present fashion, and served all the purposes of a Town Hall, until the present and tasteful building was erected on the plot (a small paddock) in the centre of the Grove, Hackney.

By a license granted by the Bishop of London to the Rev. Peter Newcome, then vicar of Hackney, and dated 6th May, 1706, the Church House was to be pulled down ; and so much of the land on which it stood as at that time impinged upon, and contracted the roadway (*i.e.*, Church-street) was to be added to the road for the widening of the same, and certain other portions were to be thrown into and become part of the churchyard. About the same time a house then occupied by Thomas Holgate, a cornchandler, was put back for the same object, and the houses re-built as they now stand, an opening, as a carriage way, being left for the new rectory premises, which were about the same time purchased, and set out as they were until very lately. A portion was walled off and set apart for a commodious church room, and beyond that coroner's offices and mortuary, an equivalent for this apportionment being secured elsewhere. The Rectory House was enlarged at either end, and the front and back walls re-built in 1826.

We now pass to our old churchyard, happily designated in an interesting article in the *Standard* of 19th September, 1892, "The Hospitallers' Acre,"—better still "God's Acre." Owing, however, to the character of our village in days gone by, we can hardly say of its occupants—

> "Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
> The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

They may have been rude enough in one sense, that is, may have wanted the polish of modern society, but many of them were great and noble in their day, and the mighty doers of doughty deeds. Clearly this was not an Anglo-Saxon churchyard. We do not find here what is so conspicuous in some more ancient graveyards—*teste* St. Michael's at St. Alban's—where there are still *in situ* graves which are really stone coffins. These are fixed only half way in the soil, the stone lid of the shallow tomb (hermetically sealed) being just above the ground level. But most of these have disappeared. In the time our churchyard first received its dead the several interments were unmarked by stones of any kind—they might have memorial brasses, or marble slabs, as now, affixed to the interior of the church walls, recording their death, &c., but only those whose wealth, position, and influence entitled them to such sepulture were buried in the church, and then always at much greater cost. I believe our Hospitallers and Templars —proud knights and prouder monks as they were—were buried in the open ground, and that the raised surface of God's Acre is due to their, as well as our kindred's dust. The Rev. J. Kenworthy tells us that the oldest dated gravestone is 1705, and that a very low stone. All the present high head-stones are a comparatively modern invention. I should imagine that the pathways on either side of the old Tower, embracing, as it were, the church edifice between them, were co-eval with the consecration of the ground, but the following quaint item from the Vestry minutes, points, I think, to the narrow pathway which runs from the Beehive house, along the southern border of the old and new churchyards, to the Churchwell-path at the eastern border: "Item: 27th Nov., 1657, that a passage be made at the south-west angle between the "Cage" and Sir Thomas Vyner's house, and that John Wetherhead remove his hog-stye, which stands in the way." Probably this "cage," a place of imprisonment in public, stood in front of the two altar tombs which are still conspicuous objects as you enter the churchyard on the south side of the Old Town Hall. But if there was a cage, where were the stocks? Neither Robinson nor Simpson can enlighten me.

An earlier Vestry minute reads as follows, and is interesting as setting forth our mediæval styles of punishment. It is signed by Sir William Bulstrode and others, 17th May, 1630: "That Mr. Giles Debutt, Churchwarden, disburse such sums of money as shall presently erect one cage, a coocking stoole (cucking stool), and a whipping post substantially fitted and furnished with such necessaries as are needful thereunto." Yet stocks are not mentioned. Elsewhere I have seen them annexed to the cage which was a sort of open, temporary prison. The stool was conveniently near the Hackney Brook for the use of scolds and unquiet women. Bakers giving short weight were put there, but without being ducked in the water, being otherwise exposed to the jeers and peltings with mud by the mob. The Rev. Dr. Doulben had at this time been made Bishop of Bangor, and signed the Vestry minutes as such. The entrance to the churchyard on either side the Old Church House was through lych-gates, as are shown in an old engraving of the church house. (I should explain for some of my readers that a lych or lich-gate was a gate-way with a roof over it—the word lich is the Gothic name for "corpse"—and it was at this spot the corpse rested while the clergy were preparing to meet it at the church door).

If it be but to show the ups and downs of life in the earlier history of our village, I must ask leave to make a digression. Sir Thomas Rowe (or Roe), knight, who was Lord Mayor of London in 1568, and had for his wife, Mary, daughter of Sir John Gresham, resided in Hackney, but in this year purchased Higham Hall, Walthamstow. He died 18th September, 1570, in the thirteenth year of Queen Elizabeth. By his will he was buried "in the chapel on the south side of the quire of Hackney Church, where he commonly sat." His grandson, Sir Henry Roe (who erected a monument to the memory of his father, Sir Henry Roe, who had been also a Lord Mayor of London, and died in 1612) as

I have before stated, built the Rowe Chapel, still standing, as a burial place for his family, who in their former and following generations seemed to have possessed considerable wealth and estates; yet the Muswell-hill branch of the family in the lack of male heirs, became extinct in the person of Anthony Rowe, who was buried at Hackney in 1704. It is true, through a daughter, the eldest "Mary," who was mother to Wills Hills, Earl of Hillsborough before named, the line in blood still exists, yet we find the following among the minutes of the Vestry, dated 14th September, 1706: "A petition of Henry Row, formerly an inhabitant of this parish, representing his very great poverty, and praying the gentlemen of the parish to assist him." It was unanimously agreed to allow him five pounds to buy clothes presently, and give him half-a-crown per week, to be paid weekly by the churchwardens until further orders. He was a lineal descendant of Sir Thomas Rowe, and also of Sir Henry Rowe, who bequeathed an annual sum of bread and coals, to the amount of £5 5s. 2d., now received by the parish of Hackney through the Mercers' Company.

CHAPTER IX.

(PAPERS XXV., XXVI., XXVII.)

BEFORE I pass on I would direct attention to two altar tombs within the railings enclosing the old chancel and the Rowe chapel. Here lie several of the earlier members of the Tyssen family, to whom our present estimable Lord of the Manor (now Lord Amherst of Hackney) belongs. Their name first appears in the records of our Vestry on the 14th September, 1689, where we find Francis Tyssen, Esq. unanimously chosen vestryman in the room of Alderman Blackwell, deceased. On the 9th April 1690, "it was ordered that Francis Tyssen, Esq., upon the considerations of his giving twenty guineas to the use of the parish, shall have and enjoy, to the sole use of him and his family, during his abode in this parish, that pew in the middle aisle that formerly did belong to Squire Rowe's family. Here then we find the Tyssens stepping into the Rowe's leading position.[44]

October 15th, 1706, we find Mr. Tyssen denominated the rector, *i.e.*, "lay rector." It will not be out of place if I here give, very briefly some particulars of Lord Amherst's ancestry. A Francis Tyssen, merchant, settled in Ghent, in Flanders, and subsequently at Flushing, in Zealand. His son, Daniel Tyssen, married Appolonia Ridley, grandniece of the martyed Bishop Ridley ; he died about 1647, *ætat* 46. He left a son (born in Flushing) named Francis, who came to London, was a merchant in Philpot-lane, was naturalized, died in 1690, and was buried in the Dutch Church, Austin Friars. It was a son of this latter, also a Francis Tyssen, who came to the parish of Hackney, living in the hamlet of Shacklewell, and was thus the resident progenitor of the Tyssen family. Here he died, and was buried in the chancel of Hackney Church on 6th December, 1710.

Just seven years afterwards his son, also a Francis Tyssen, died, and his funeral at the Old Church was so sumptuous as to call forth a special notice in the Gazette of 23rd November, by the order of the Earl of Suffolk, Deputy Earl Marshal, animadverting upon the style, and setting forth what should be done, according to the grade in society of the deceased. We read in the newspaper of that day that he died at Shacklewell, from thence his body was removed to the Goldsmiths' Hall where it lay in state for two days with more than regal surroundings; from thence the funeral procession started on the 11th of November at ten o'clock at night, escorted and accompanied by twenty clergymen, sixty horsemen (his tenants), four King's trumpeters, a led horse caparisoned in velvet, with six pages, the hearse with scutcheons, feathers, and streamers, then an empty state coach, followed by thirty-six coaches, six horses in each, with his brother, John Tyssen, and the mourners. The funeral reached the church at one o'clock in the morning- Here the horsemen lined each side of the way, as the corpse was carried into the church; the King's trumpeters sounding as each coach set down its company at the lych-gate. The church had its funeral decorations also, and the body was buried within the Communion rails. The entire cost was £2000.

Three days after, viz , on the 14th November, a son and heir was born, and he, Francis John Tyssen, in due time. succeeded his father as Lord of the Manor. He died on 9th September, 1781. He was succeeded by a Francis Tyssen, who died unmarried on 5th, June, 1813. Thence through the female line by the marriage of Mary Tyssen, with John Amherst, Captain, R.N., of Rochester, County of Kent, in 1766, the Manor came to William George Daniel Tyssen, Esq., the grandfather of the present Lord Amherst.

It is but fair to quote from Lord Amherst's speech at the banquet recently given in his honour, the following further particulars of his family and present title, derived, as I have already noted, from a Captain Amherst, R.N. A peerage was conferred upon his kinsman General

Amherst, at the taking of Quebec, followed by the surrender of Montreal, and with it all the Province of Canada—one of the brightest gems in the Imperial Crown — the decendant of that Baron Amherst is now Earl Amherst. He readily sanctioned the adoption of the title by our peer, as another branch of the same family. Having no son, the Queen has been pleased to grant the descent of the title to his eldest daughter, the present wife of Lord William Cecil, and then her heirs male. The Cecils are also lineally descended from Lord Burleigh, Queen Elizabeth's most worthily trusted and great minister—and kinsman of the no less great Lord Salisbury—and with the Cecils there was further direct lineal connection with that Lady Latimer, whose beautiful tomb is now to be seen in Hackney Church, restored by the munificence of another notable descendant, our Baroness Burdett-Coutts. Our present Lady Amherst represents a branch of the Wentworth family who preceded the Tyssens as Lords of the Manor of Hackney.

In a closet in one of the side galleries of Westminster Abbey is shown a large chest, like a sailor's, on which is inscribed the name of Major Andre, and in this chest the coffined body of Major Andre was brought from America on November 28th, 1821, under charge of Mr. Lockyer, secretary of the Greenwich Hospital, who was appointed to act for the Major's three surviving sisters. Doubtless the carriage of the body was thus effected to meet the superstitious scruples of the common sailors, who were thus kept in ignorance of the nature of the freight. Poor Major Andre's history is a painful one, but as he was a Hackney man by birth, I must refer to it He was the hero of Fennimore Cooper's deeply interesting tale "The Spy." His family must have been Hackney people for some years. The Major was born, some say, in a house behind Clapton pond, others at Beecholme House, opposite Brooke House (Beecholme-road now occupies the site of the house and garden).

There were several branches of the family; for instance, an altar tomb at the north-west corner of the old churchyard has plainly sculptured "David Andre, *æt.* 79, died 1791; David Andre, son of the above, *æt.* 68, died 1819." These were respectively his uncle and cousin. His parents are buried in the centre of the south plot of the old churchyard, and his father was the Anthony Andre, who, by his will, 1766, left £50 for the poor of Hackney. Dr. Cornwall Reynolds, who lived and practised at No. 1, Clapton Square (always, and still a doctor's residence), was a near relation, and at this moment blood relations under another name are resident in Clapton. But I turn to a very brief record of his last services for his country, and his painful death. He was highly talented—poet, writer, and painter. The only portrait of him is an engraving from a painting by himself. Entering the army, he was, when only twenty-nine, promoted to a majority, and was appointed Adjutant-General to Sir Henry Clinton, at that time in command of the British forces in the American wars, which led to the separation of that colony from our mother country, and the establishment of the United States as a Republic under General Washington.

A Major-General Arnold, who, from being a horse-dealer, had, by his bravery, military skill, and courage, risen to that post in the American army, and had been severely wounded also, was appointed Governor of Philadelphia, which we had evacuated in 1778. His extravagance and impetuosity, when checked, brought him at last before a court-martial, and he was sentenced to be reprimanded by the Commander-in-Chief, General Washington. This indignity, as he regarded it, called forth his intense hate for the service, and he opened secret communication with Sir H. Clinton, through a Colonel Robinson. Major Andre was at last selected to confer personally with Arnold, and did so at a house on neutral ground, and through this interview it was arranged that Arnold should deliver over West Point to the British troops. Andre, foiled in his attempt to return, as he had come, by water, resolved to get back by land, and across the American lines. At Arnold's advice, he doffed his uniform and put on plain clothes, of course, having papers with him, and had just entered neutral lines between the two armies when he was seized by three men, who searched him and took him before Colonel Jameson, commanding their scouting parties, and thence before a court-martial, under the peremptory orders of General Washington. By that Board he was found guilty, having been taken in disguise, and with several papers upon him giving intelligence to the enemy. Sentence of death was pronounced, and that by hanging. Every possible effort was made to save his life, and to move General Washington to that effect. Poor Andre wished commutation to a soldier's execution by shooting. To this Washington, it is said, made an evasive answer, and it was only at the instant of his execution he found himself under a gibbet, calling forth the heart-rending cry, "Must I then die in this manner?" but immediately afterwards adding "It will be but a momentary pang," and our Hackney boy died nobly, mourned even by his enemies.[45]

Americans may excuse Washington's obduracy—I cannot. Determination to show his full purpose, war to the knife, until the severance of the States was fully accomplished, may have been most judicious, and possibly a saving of life by abruptly terminating hostilities; but this could have been effected by a reprieve at the last moment, or even the small mercy of giving a gallant young officer a soldier's death. Washington himself was, at that period, scarcely so entirely clear of his former allegiance to the British Crown as to be far removed from a rebel himself. It is assuredly a blot on his otherwise admirable character which time and events can never remove. Forty years after, by special request of our government, the body was given up to us—removed from its grave, covered with only unshapen blocks of stone, from under the gibbet near Orange Town, marked by a willow tree—and brought to this country, where it now lies in the south aisle of our noblest "Valhalla," Westminster Abbey, and near by the cenotaph and inscription set up to his memory by King George the Third.

Among sundry interesting particulars about the old church furnished me by Mr. Harding, was that the last wedding in it was on 11th July, 1797, Thomas Mead, widower, and Elizabeth Rutt, spinster, by license. The last baptism was Sophia, daughter of Joseph and Hannah Jackson. Before we quit the old church it will be interesting to recall one of the curious customs of those bye-gone days, namely the issue and action thereon of "King's Letters" or "Briefs." These were direct orders for special collections in the church towards the relief of special calamities, such as from fires, shipwreck, storm, or even the redemption of Christians captured by Sallee rovers and sold into slavery. Thus during the years 1604-5 collections were made in our church for fires at Greenwich, Uttoxeter, King Honiton, Chiswick, Barking, Enfield, in London itself, and at Metheringham in Lincolnshire; this last place having had a collection on 1st April, ~~1606; and on 20th~~ February, 1661.

I name "Metheringham" because it seems to bear special reference to the residence in Hackney of Lincolnshire men, who must have come from the neighbourhood of that village, which is well known to me. It is situated about eight miles south of the city of Lincoln—and within easy distance of two other villages, Waddington and Harmston, hereafter alluded to. Old Strype tells us that Sir Edward Clarke was Lord Mayor of London in 1697, 9th year of William III., that he was the son of — Clarke of Lincoln (not I should imagine an ancestor of the blood mixture Clarke, whose successors have just put a final "e" to his name) and that the aforesaid Sir Edward had been an apprentice to his uncle, George Clarke, Esq., mercer in Cheapside.

Without doubt this last "George Clarke" was a parishioner and freeholder of Hackney—resident in Mare-street, who died 14th August, 1668, and whose will was proved by his widow, Ann Clarke, Richard Sherbrooke, and Charles Thorold, executors, on 3rd September, 1668. By it he left as a charge upon his lands in Hackney Marsh six pounds annually, namely one pound to some godly Protestant minister for a sermon to be preached annually on the 17th November, being the coronation day of Queen Elizabeth, of blessed memory, etc., etc., and to twenty poor housekeepers, namely, the clerk and sexton, the six poor widows in Dr. Spurstowe's alm-houses, and twelve to be chosen out of Mare-street and Church-street, 5s. each=£5. Now the Clarke family had been resident in the village of Waddington (at one time far more populous and pretentious than it is now), situated only four miles south of Lincoln, and it is an interesting fact that in its old church, which has been reduced in size, there was (and I presume is still) affixed high up on the white-washed wall of the transept, the royal arms of Queen Elizabeth, emblazoned on canvass and framed, having the two leopards as supporters, the motto, *semper eadem*, with date (if I remember well) 1560, perhaps placed there by our parishioner, who now rests on this side the doorway of the Rowe Chapel. The Clarke family were very old residents of Waddington, while the fact is uncontrovertible that Charles Thorold, the executor above-named, was an inhabitant of the next village, Harmston, only one mile off—Harmston Hall having been the seat of the Thorold family for many generations. Here old Strype much helps me—for on reference to his edition of Stowe's London up-to-date, *i.e.*, 1720, we find that the aforesaid Charles Thorold married Ann, the daughter of George and Ann Clarke. Of their issue, the eldest, Charles, was Sir Charles Thorold. sheriff of London, in 1705, who died a bachelor—a third son, Samuel, who died 1720, Strype calls him Cœlebs —I suppose he was in search of a wife—and a second son, George, doubtless named after his grandfather, George Clarke, who became Sir George Thorold, Bart., Lord Mayor of London in 1720, 6th year of George I., in which year, our Church Lecturer for thirty years, completed his edition of Stowe.

I have often gazed on the life-sized portrait (by, I believe, Sir James Thornhill) of Sir George Thorold, in his full robes as Lord Mayor, at Harmston Hall—little dreaming, when Lincoln and London were in those days as far apart as to time in travelling as London and Aberdeen are now, that that man of commanding presence, and in his full bottomed wig and court costume, had been born and reared in Mare-street, Hackney, my own place of birth, and was most probably, through his mother, of the same lineage as myself. Reference to Mr. Simpson's book shows that George Clarke and Charles Thorold were resident in Mare-street, in April, 1657—and by Mr. Harding's examination of our early church registers, excerpta from which he has kindly given me, I am able to note the following. Charles Thorold, son of Charles Thorold and Ann, his wife, baptised the 21st September, 1654. Then follow the other children, of whom I only give name and date. Ann, 21st Nov., 1655; Rebecca, 23rd November, 1657; John, born on 24th October, about six at night, and christened 26th October, 1656 (such specific date of birth only given of noble families); Elizabeth, 2nd March, 1659; Prudence, 6th November, 1660; George (the future Lord Mayor), baptised 21st April, 1662; Martha, 19th July, 1665. In the interim the first wife must have died, and Martha seems to have been the first child of a second wife, Elizabeth. The register does not agree with our historian Strype, as he names a child Samuel—perhaps subsequently born and baptised elsewhere. However, the above record gives us ample evidence of how the population of Hackney was increasing even two hundred years ago.

Charles Thorold, senior, was the son of Thomas Thorold, described by Strype as a Turkey merchant of London, and of Harmston, Lincolnshire. From the character of George Clarke's bequest we may gather that he was fond of agriculture, if not himself a farmer, for he specially indicates his lands in Hackney Marsh—and it is a noteworthy fact that many descendants of this Clarke family are at this day among the richest and most skilful Lincolnshire farmers. Thomas Thorold and George Clarke were elected vestrymen of Hackney on the 16th April, 1651, "as among the most emynent, ablest, antiants of the said parish for the supply vestrymen," while on 19th April, 1677, George Clarke and Charles Thorold are named as residents in Mare-street.

Mr. Harding further informs me that the marriage of Charles Thorold and Ann Clarke is not in the church register—so probably they were married in Lincolnshire—and in the absence of their names from the burial roll, that the Thorolds especially, were buried in Harmston. In those days, and even later on, country people clung even to their own village churchyards, although dying in London. An uncle of my own, prior to my birth, dying in London, was removed at some cost to the family to their resting-place in Waddington. It may interest my Conservative readers to hear that Mr. Henry Chaplin's residence is Blankney Hall, Blankney, Lincolnshire, and almost adjoining the above named two villages.

Some few years after the above dates the Clarke family seem to have disappeared from Hackney, and it was not until 120 years after, in 1819, that another of that name and family became a Hackney man—in entire ignorance that others of his family had dwelt in the same village some 209 years before.

CHAPTER X.[46]

(Papers xxviii., xxix., xxx.)

UNDER the guidance of Mr. J. G. Bradford, of Dalston-rise (a zealous young "Old Mortality," whose work among the tombs in our churchyard, not as a physical, but as a moral resurrectionist, does him infinite credit), I visited the base of the old tower, which had latterly been the sexton's tool house, but formerly the western end of the church, being in olden time entered on the north by a square porch, having a north window. On the destruction of the church the eastern side of the tower was filled in with masonry, leaving only space for a double door, which of course is always kept locked—and here I may add I was glad to note that both this one-time tool house, and what has been the mortuary chamber on the floor above had been emptied and partially swept—if not garnished. Our active and zealous Tyssen librarian, Mr. Chambers, and Mr. Ivatts, of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society, were with us, and we were delighted to find a magnificent altar tomb in capital preservation in this basement.

It would seem it had been judiciously protected by scantling while the tools were there, this had been removed with them. The northern side of the tower basement—which formerly opened into the entrance porch—has also been filled in with masonry, involving the filling in with like material the north side of the tomb, on the entablature in which are no doubt further inscriptions. In the tomb lie the remains of John Robert Dean (who died 1699) and his children. It was erected by his widow (who possibly lies near also), and special instructions are given that it shall be used by no one else. On the upper stone is inserted a metallic plate, with full armorial bearings exquisitely engraved upon it. The metal is not brass, but seems more like what was called Britannia metal.

Great changes in the old churchyard, and the tower's surroundings are impending; may I venture to make a suggestion?—why not open well out the basement of the tower, also the mortuary, and the bell-ringers' chamber, clear and clean their walls, and to them affix the many bits of of old monuments which I find our Rector has unearthed, but placed in out-of-the-way corners in the vestibules, and under the staircases of the church, having really nowhere else to put them, and let his praiseworthy zeal be backed up by his churchwardens and others, and let these walls of the old tower—still consecrated, and requiring no fresh faculty—be adorned with these mementoes of departed and great nobility; from the Rowe chapel others (not belonging to it) might be removed to the same spot, and I see no reason why the Rowe chapel itself, with its beautiful and buried funereal sculptures, should not be once more opened to light of day—an object which I should think the Marquis of Downshire (its owner), if properly approached, would assent to, and promote with his purse and his influence. Our churchyard and its deeply interesting and ancient memorials have too long been a disgrace to us—not particularly to the Rector and churchwardens—they have their hands full with diminished funds, but to ourselves as a parish—to those whose kindred sleep their last sleep in that hallowed ground, and I include myself among the defaulters—although certain plots in which I feel a deep personal interest have not been forgotten.

The original churchyard served its purpose up to the year 1571, when enlargement seemed imperative. Still they contrived to shift as well as they could, and about the year 1707 the dwarf wall running from north to south, which still divides the two churchyards, was erected. The oldest part of the churchyard would seem to have been on the south of the tower, and perhaps in a line due north to the Rectory wall. On 25th September, 1756, the churchwarden called a special meeting of the parishioners, and announced "that by means of the great increase of the inhabitants there was scarce room to dig any new graves therein, and the owners of the church field adjoining had demanded one hundred and sixty pounds for little more than one quarter of an acre for enlarging the said yard." We next find that on the 6th October, 1763, the aforesaid land having been purchased, was duly consecrated by the Bishop of London. What might have been done with the ground in the interim, we have no record—but at a vestry meeting held on the 8th April, 1765, complaint was made "that the old churchyard lies extremely rough and uneven, and it was ordered to be levelled, and interments to be permitted only where there were head and foot stones." On the 14th February, 1756, it had been resolved by the vestry "that four lamps be erected in the churchyard in such places as shall be most convenient for lighting the same." On the 25th November, 1765, the vestry ordered that the sextoness be allowed to charge two shillings for the first digging of a grave in the new ground.

It may be well to explain here that the original churchyard was bounded on the south by Sir Thomas Vyner's (Bohemia, or Black and White) house and grounds, on the south-east and east by the church field and the grounds of Thomas Sutton, and the north by the Rectory and its grounds—Church-street being on the west. A further purchase was made of the whole of the church field of a Thomas Ryder and others in 1790, not only for enlargement of the burial ground, but for the erection of a new church—the land in question being about six acres; it was consecrated by the Bishop of London soon after. The erection of this new, and our present church was begun in 1791, and was completed and consecrated on the 15th July, 1797, by Bishop Selby Porteus; and it was said to have been the only church consecrated by him in the diocese of London.

Mr. Harding also informs me that the first baptism in the present parish church was Thomas, son of Joseph and Mary Carter, and the first wedding Jonathan Bevis, widower, and Ann Savage, widow, on 16th July, 1797. The style of the church is a Maltese cross, and within and without is painfully plain, although in recent years much improved by the beautifully carved oaken altar-piece, and the choir-stalls and other embellishments, the very presence of which at this day is a striking reminder of how cheerless it looked when I was first carried there, and even when in later years I made my vows to God, and promises to one who proved to be this life's best companion for nearly half a century. I am not perhaps a churchman of what in this day may be considered the highest school, or of the most advanced ritual, but to the temple of Him to whom our highest worship and most intense devotion should ever be paid, I must hold it is our duty to render such reasonable amount of decorative art as we are only too pleased to see adorning our drawing-rooms.

As to the structure itself, it is without doubt a credit to the architect (Mr. Spiller) and builder—its walls are immensely thick, and bricks, stone, mortar, and bond timbers are so thoroughly compacted, that had we but leverage enough to accomplish it, the building might be removed in one mass without sustaining injury. In proof I may state that the foundations were originally laid on timbers in sand ever saturated with water from the natural springs to which they had dug down. When, however, the still deeper main drainage under the London Sewer's Act was cut through our village, the land springs were drawn off, and this planking began to decay, necessitating the thorough under-pinning of the foundations all round at considerable cost. Yet, although by the above-named drainage one entire corner of the church was literally in suspension, a crack only across its magnificent ceiling gave the note of alarm.

As will be seen, this spacious area of 104 feet from east to west, and from north to south, has for the support of the immense stretch of ceiling the outer walls only, and the centre area of 63 feet is without a pillar; while floor and galleries have seats for 2,700 people, it will hold nearly 4,000. The east window is of stained glass, emblematic of the first day of Creation, "and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The east window was only designed to be in plain glass, and so it was constructed, and remained until 1816, when dazzled as clergy and congregation were by the excessive glare of that unprotected light, a private subscription was raised by Archdeacon Watson and his friends, and the stained-glass window, as we now see, was put in at the cost of about £1,000. The royal arms were in stained glass over the font; that has been shifted, and a memorial stained glass window to a Mr. Rutherford, subject, "The baptism of our Saviour by St. John," put over the font in its place.

If there be one duty more difficult than another it is to my mind that of the "censor"; it seems to me so pleasing to praise, so painful to blame those who have been set over us socially or politically—in Church, parish, or State—in the past and during the present times. But looking at the doings of our ecclesiastical authorities in past days—only a century ago—by the light of the present, one is compelled to regard their action respecting the old church and the new as a bungle and blunder from beginning to end. I do not for one moment call in question the personal piety and moral excellence of the one hundred and fifty-three trustees, good men and true as they might be, including the rector, the vicar, and the churchwardens, who were appointed to carry out the Act of Parliament intituled 30. George III., C. 71, an Act for taking down the old church and tower, and building another church and tower, and making an additional churchyard. A better man than the Rev. Thos. Cornthwaite never lived—as good in lip as in life, and his family an example to all around, and so were Archdeacon Watson, his immediate successor, and others of the trustees—as leaders of men, and were all that was excellent. Still they were very "Iconoclasts," the old church (despite all promises and professions to deal carefully with the structure and its contents) was ruthlessly pulled down, and its deeply interesting monuments (with some few exceptions) scattered and shattered.

Meanwhile the new structure was being erected, and as far as the building is concerned, thoroughly well done; but in this the authorities bungled. It is said the plan of the church proper was set out, but they forgot the steeple; then the steeple was planned out and erected, but proved too weak to carry the bells, which only a few years ago, in 1854, were removed from the old tower and placed in the new steeple, which had been purposely strengthened to receive them, and first chimed in their new belfry on 22nd October, 1854. The next difficulty was the correct estimate of cost. £12,500, the sum first estimated and raised, proved insufficient, therefore in 1795 (I am quoting from Dr. Robinson's work) an additional £5,000 was raised, and for the third time, when the omission of the steeple came before the trustees, another sum of £7,500 had to be raised, making a total of £25,000. By this last sum the steeple was erected, and the porticoes added, without which additions I leave my readers to judge how intensely opera-like our new church must have looked—and they may wonder with me at the taste of the 153 trustees, and as to what they meant to do with the structure eventually.

And then came the demolition of the old church—the tower and Rowe Chapel happily remaining. But why have pulled it down? Consecrated by its usage for centuries, despite the various forms of doctrine held during that lengthened period, set apart as the ecclesiastical centre of our parish by the Knights Templars at least 500 years before—and, well repaired, as fit to fulfil its sacred purpose 500 years to come. Wiser far have been our fellow parishioners—I refer to Stoke Newington—in these latter days, who still retain their old church, and make efficient use of it too. High Church and Low Church, there they are—each well filled Sunday after Sunday with worshippers holding views consonant with the varied ritual—and thus helping to promote a good fellow feeling and harmony by their juxta-position, which naught else would have so effectually accomplished. Will my readers forgive me for this deliverance of my thoughts, and my expression of regret that one century ago my fellow townsmen had not been wiser men!

Ram's Chapel, of which I shall write hereafter, was in 1766 let to the Rev. Thomas Cornthwaite, then Vicar of Hackney, for a term of years, and used as a Chapel of Ease to the mother church—the old church would have well taken its place.

On the completion of the new church the churchyard was set out, and planted as we now see it, and on his tomb close to St. John's Church-road, is the following record: "Sacred to the memory of Harry Sedgwick, Esq., of Homerton in this parish, who died 21st April, 1818, aged 66 years. The planting of the trees in this churchyard was suggested and superintended by him in 1797." The trees are for the most part horse-chestnuts, and as I remember to have first noticed them, say about 1830, they were then in all the beauty of their prime. In fact, so celebrated was our churchyard in days gone by that people came from all quarters to see it—cemeteries with their lovely parterres being then almost unknown. There is one remarkable omission in our churchyard, I believe there is neither a yew tree nor a cypress, both so indicative of, and appropriate to God's acre.

Before reference is made to the memorial marbles, ancient and modern, in our present church, special attention should be directed to the organ, which according to old style, stands out most conspicuously in the western gallery. This instrument, which by frequent additions from time to time, has much increased in size and power, is no mean instrument, and some of its older stops have a close resemblance to those celebrated organs built by Father Smith, of which that in St. Paul's Cathedral is a splendid specimen. A portion of it is that which was first erected in the old church, where I think (in the absence of better information) it must have stood in what has been lately the mortuary chamber in our old Tower. On 9th January, 1665 (old style) the Vestry ordered that Mr. Josiah Rycroft, the then churchwarden, set up an organ in the parish church of Hackney, and that he shall have the liberty to erect it either in the body of the church or in the chancel. There was a legend, or rather a tradition, that this organ was originally presented to the church by two school boys, but I cannot find any reference to it now. Robinson scarcely alludes to the organ and Simpson only gives his *excerpta* from the Vestry minutes, and what I am giving are the gatherings from that source.

I might here mention as a bit of old scandal that on this particular 9th January 1665 (only 227 years ago) our worthy vestrymen had got to loggerheads with their national schoolmaster, one Mr. Robert Skingle, for his wilful neglect, and refusal to return to his school after several summonses from the vicar (the Rev. Thomas Jeamson), churchwardens, and divers of the rest of the inhabitants of this parish ; and a great many other charges of inefficiency, and neglect of his duties were brought against him. Mr. Skingle threatens a suit at law, the Vestry threaten an action for trespass against Mr. Skingle, thus goes on the strife for about two months. Eventually they eject the schoolmaster and introduce the organ—a more harmonious article—and on the 28th October, 1666, Mr. Thomas White, the organist, is "to be paid 28s. by the month for his pains in that employment." Somewhere else the instrument is called a pair of organs, an old title, doubtless descriptive of its composite character, and this may have given colour to the two school boys' tradition.

Organs cost money to keep up then as now. We find on 21st

January, 1713, John Knoppell received £90 to repair and amend the organ and keep it in repair for seven years "gratis." On 27th January, 1723, twelve guineas were paid to John Knoppell for a sexqualto stop, and Mr. Thomas Howson, churchwarden was ordered to provide a case for the keys to keep out the dust, &c. Then on the 20th January, 1745, the organ was so thoroughly out of repair, that a Mr. Richard Bridge enters into a contract to put it once more in thorough order. In the list of organists we find that on the 11th August, 1753, Edward Henry Purcell was elected at a salary of £28 a year. He was grandson of the great church music composer, Henry Purcell, who was organist of Westminster Abbey, in 1680. Our organ therefore is of some note, as appears by the above fragmentary history, which I trust my readers will pardon me for giving so much at length, but as I proposed at the outset, my ramblings embrace persons, places and things.

In directing attention to the very few modern monuments found in the new church, I would wish particularly to direct my readers' notice to those whose pious zeal, and a sound antiquarian spirit, have recovered from the old church, and re-erected in the vestibules of the new one; and I trust my brief allusions to these latter monuments will induce worshippers in the church itself, and the parishioners generally to visit them. The first in importance is the tomb of Christopher Urswick, formerly at the east end of the altar in the old church, and now (rather in the dark) in the north-west vestibule—consisting of a Tudor arch over a tomb—it is believed it was used as the sepulchre on which to place the assumed body of our Lord, in the Roman Catholic rites at Easter—hence called an Easter sepulchre tomb, *i.e.*, from Good Friday eve to Easter Sunday.

This monument was erected by Urswick himself, and by his will his body was interred beneath it, and before the image of St. Augustine. Urswick was rector in 1502. Simpson tells us that the family probably came from Urswick, the church of which belonged to Furness Abbey, and he, in his will, bequeaths a gilt cup to that abbey. He also cites a tradition, that there was once an older village, the good wives of which clamoured for more water, when, on the petition of the priest, they were overwhelmed by a flood which now forms Urswick Tarn. The tomb is well preserved, and the original brass, affixed to the covering slab in the pavement in the old church, is now inlaid in the shelf of the tomb.

A brass commemorating Arthur Dericote and his four wives is near Urswick's; he died 12th November, 1562, his fourth wife and one child surviving him—a citizen of London, and parishioner of Hackney. They are depicted as kneeling, each before a desk. Dericote's funeral was a very grand one. Over this is a tablet to the Rev. Dr. Worthington, who was only one year vicar of the parish, dying in 1671. Under the stairs is placed the monument of Henry Banister, Esq., citizen, goldsmith, and at one time Sheriff of London, dying on the 25th July, 1628, aged 90. His widow, who must have been much younger, afterwards married Sir William Bulstrode. While Mr. H. Bannister, as a parishioner, served the office of churchwarden with Sir Henry Rowe in 1619, Bulstrode's name frequently appears in the Vestry minutes. Over the door leading to the chancel is a brass with the figure of a minister in the pulpit, the Rev. Hugh Johnson, who was vicar 40 years, and died 16th January, 1611, aged 72. Above Urswick's monument is that of Bishop Doulben, one time vicar, and subsequently Bishop of Bangor. It is a portrait-bust, probably a good likeness, pointed beard, and ruff, in Bishop's robes, with a book before him as in the pulpit. He died in 1633.

The most beautiful monument, which has been re-erected at the cost of the Baroness Burdett Coutts, is that of Lady Latimer, from whom she is lineally descended, being co-heiress with her sister Mrs. Money Coutts of the ancient Baronies of Scales, Latimer, and Baddlesmere. This monument has been placed in the north-west vestibule of the church; while there is much of the original structure, much has had to be added to it, and the piecing together of old and new materials must have been no ordinary task. It is believed that the tomb at the time of the destruction of the old church was in bad repair, and the indifference of the trustees and their workmen caused it to be pulled to pieces, and shut up in the Rowe Chapel, portions of the exquisite marble being also relegated to the curbing of the churchyard paths. The accident in the Rowe Chapel, resulting in the death of Miss Goodwin, the sextoness, rendered repairs absolutely necessary, and then the fragments of this tomb were turned out into the open, when some scoundrel broke off the nose of Lady Latimer. A beautiful Cecil shield among the debris, attracted the attention of the Rev. J. Kenworthy, who was about to repair the shield himself, when he was advised to apply to the Baroness, who undertook the entire work, bringing out once more to view a splendid specimen of a tomb of the Elizabethan ages, and covered with the armorial bearings of many noble families.

Lady Latimer was Lucy, daughter of Henry, Earl of Worcester, and probably still lies undisturbed in a vault at the upper part of the north aisle, just in a line with the western railings, enclosing the Rowe Chapel and chancel. She was married to John, Lord Latimer, and by him had four daughters (sculptured on the tomb) each married, the first to the Earl of Northumberland, the second to Baron Burleigh, the third to Sir William Cornwallis, and the fourth to Sir John Danvers. Lady Latimer died 23rd February, 1582. Her effigy—doubtless a portrait of her—is beautifully sculptured, reclining on the top of the tomb, with a coronet on her head, a scarlet robe, and a gown richly gilt.

CHAPTER XI.

(PAPERS, XXXI., XXXII., XXXIII.)

AS a Hackney man it would scarcely do for me to pass on too quickly in my records of the days gone by, and of those who strutted their brief, troublous life on the stage of our old English history, when despotism on the part of the sovereign and craft and cringing on the part of the subject, were the marked features of those fearsome times. Yonder in that old churchyard, in ground once within the sacred precincts of the church itself, in vaults happily undesecrated by pick and shovel of the too curious—there, "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest," still slumber in the silent dust some of the great, and the proud, and the noble men and women high in station, yet the mere slaves and tools of an arbitrary king—and of them none was of more note than the eldest son-in-law of our Lady Latimer, Lord Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland—who married the Lady Catherine—and a tablet near Lady Latimer's tomb states he was buried in the old church.

His life was most eventful. He first made love to, and won the heart of Anne Boleyn—finding too late that the King, Henry VIII., was his rival—as he was under the domination, and in the household of Cardinal Wolsey, (then at the zenith of his fame) he protested against his youthful affection, and sternly forbade its further prosecution ; and, strange to say, this interference incited the enmity of the poor girl herself, who felt all the warmth of a first love ; yet eventually yielding to the blandishments and despotic will of that uxorious and passionate monarch. Lord Henry Percy was soon among the number of Wolsey's enemies, who, despite his altered conduct in the latter years of his chequered life, his affability and hospitality to all comers—rich and poor alike—and his sincere pleasure in doing good, had the toils set by those enemies, (who basked solely in the king's smile, and were only too subservient to his obdurate will,) secretly closing around him, and so it was that our fellow parishioner was commanded by the king to arrest the Cardinal. It was on the 4th November, 1531, just as preparations were being made for the Cardinal's installation as Archbishop of York, that he was seated at dinner at Cawwood Castle, when he was apprized of the arrival of the Earl of Northumberland with a great company. Ignorant of the purport of his visit, he offered the hospitality of his house to the earl and his retinue—and Wolsey's gentleman usher, "Cavendish," thus records their interview.

They were standing at a window by the chimney in my lord's bedchamber, when the earl trembling said, with a very faint and soft voice unto my lord (laying his hand upon his arm), "My lord, I arrest you for high treason." In a few days they started for London, amidst the tears and prayers of his followers—in a few days, by reason of the excitement and justifiable horrors of his situation, (as, *en route*, he was met, and taken into closer costody by Master Kingston, the constable of the Tower) he became seriously ill, and at length reached the Abbey of Leicester on a Saturday night, saying, as he entered, "Father abbot, I am come hither to leave my bones among you." They could get no further, and on the Tuesday following, when at the point of death, poor Wolsey uttered those striking and deeply pathetic words to Master Kingston, "If I had served God as diligently as I have done the king, He would not have given me over in my grey hairs," and so he died. The earl was one of the Privy Council summoned by the king to examine the unfortunate queen, and by pronouncing her doom, attempt to legalize her murder. He sat with them, but was absent through illness when she was condemmed to die.

Most probably our earl lived at Brooke House, Upper Clapton, and and dying there, was buried in the old church. On a bracket in the same vestibule is a helmet—*temp*. Henry VIII.—rumour ascribed its original ownership to the above earl; possibly so, but if it were, it is only a mere tilting helmet, used in mimic, not in real warfare. There is another tablet here to the memory of one Walter Halliley, a wealthy parishioner, who died in 1605. Simpson tells us one of that name served as Surveyor of Highways between 1614 and 1628. It is said that the first vicar of All Saints', Clapton Park, the Rev. Halliley Stammers—an estimable clergyman and an old friend—was a lineal descendant of the same.

Affixed to the wall over the Latimer tomb is an elaborately sculptured monument to the Wood family, and from the acts of one of the members, (Bishop Wood) is of lasting interest to our parish. The monument is in the usual style of the Stuart period; at the back is a canopy set within a plainly carved frame. In the centre is a lectern, on the side of which is Thomas Wood, on the other his wife Susan, each standing. Behind the father are the four sons kneeling; behind the mother the four daughters are kneeling. Thomas Wood, Esq., was buried on 18th May, 1649, aged 84 years; Susan, his wife, on 17th October, 1650, aged 80 years. It is believed that they lived in a mansion once standing on the present site of the Thistlewaite-road, Clapton, but recently of a large white house (once occupied by the Powell family, and known as Powell house), subsequently the first home of St. John's School, for the sons of poor clergy; the lands adjacent, which must have been at one time artistically and beautifully laid out, were Thomas Wood's freehold, and here the Bishop (his third son) lived and died.

From the *Hackney Mercury*, 17th December, 1892.

We are so frequently in receipt of testimony, direct and indirect, as to the appreciation in which our series of articles entitled "Glimpses of Ancient Hackney" are held by the public generally, that no apology is needed for reproducing the following, the more as it comes from no less interesting and characteristic a correspondent than the respected pastor of the old Gravel Pit Chapel. It runs as follows:—

MY DUTCH PALOUR,
ORANGE VILLA,
HACKNEY,
December 12th, 1892.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,—I am just in receipt of a letter from my dear sister over in Brisbane, in which she says: "Thanks for the papers you send; they do so interest me and Arthur. Those sketches of Old Hackney are delightful."

That reminds me that I meant to gratefully acknowledge the kindly and devout way in which you spoke of me in connection with the Old Gravel Pit Chapel but I have not been in epistolary mood of late. Then, in case you mean to publish them as a *magnum opus*, I would just say between me and the Rev. John Davies there came Dr. James Spence, for whom Clapton Park Chapel was built, but when it was opened he could not preach in it by reason of heart disease.

Devoutly wishing health to you and yours, and to all your patients in due time,
I am, from childhood, your true neighbour,
J. De. Kewer Williams.

The Rev. Dr. Thomas Wood was Chaplain-in-Ordinary to King Charles I. and II., and was afterwards consecrated Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. He seems to have passed unscathed through the exciting times of the Commonwealth, and despite his appointment as bishop, clung to Hackney—his birth-place—as his home. Nothing would persuade him to go into the residence at Lichfield. In the parish of Hackney he was born, here he always lived, and, although a bishop, here he died. He from time to time attended the Vestry Meetings, thus showing his deep interest in the place.

By his will dated 11th Novemder, 1690, he left his property to his nephew, Henry Webb, Esq. (who was to assume and use the surname of Wood) with certain charges thereon for ever. He had in his lifetime erected two sets of Almshouses for ancient and indigent men and women. One at Ufford in Suffolk, for men; the other as we now see them at Clapton, near Clapton Pond. These latter were for ten aged widows; a chapel was erected with them, and a chaplain appointed for the same. In 1720 (I quote from Robinson), the estate was purchased by Sir William Chapman, a director of the South Sea Company. When that bubble burst it was again sold, and this time to James Powell of Hackney. The right of the nomination to the almshouses remained in the hands of Sir William Chapman and his son, Sir John, until the death of the latter in 1781, after which his widow exercised it; eventually (by a deed dated June, 1798) assigning it to the minister and Vestry of the parish, who now exercise it.

These ten aged widows, who must be above the age of sixty, were willed to have £50 yearly divided among them in half-yearly payments, and a gown every second year, with the letters "T.W." upon their shoulders, and £5 yearly, in half-yearly payments, to a chaplain to read prayers twice every week in the almshouse chapel. Provision was also made for repairs of the buildings, which are the original buildings by Bishop Wood himself. The above charges, as in the will itself, are evied upon lands in Bishop's Itchington, in the county of Warwick. A payment of 9s. every second year takes the place of the gowns aforesaid, while the duties of the chaplaincy are fulfilled by the vicar of St. James, Clapton, opposite the almshouses. By a subsequent arrangement the trustees of the Rev. Dr. Spurtowe's Charity supplement the Wood bequests by a sum of £16 annually in quarterly payments to each widow. The chapel might be made much more comfortable—and considering the great age of some of the widows it seems most desirable—by the more frequent use of a stove, if only gas. I throw this out as a strong hint (with possibly a bitter winter before us), and would ask, has the mantle of Bishop Wood fallen on any of our wealthier parishioners, who out of their abundance might emulate his bright example to this end ?[47]

Before we leave the memorials of more ancient departed worth, relics of which have been brought to the present church, I must note, in passing, the name of Bennett—remnants of a monument (a small shield of three demi-lions) erected by John Bennett to the memory of his wife, who died, 18th November, 1625—another of John Stock, died 17th January, 1703—a tablet, with letters gilded, in memory of Richard Child, died 7th May, 1638, and of Elizabeth, his wife, who had however married a second time one Thomas Sone, and died, February, 1670. Richard Child was the father of Sir Josiah Child. There are also the remains of Sir Thomas Rowe's monument, Sir Henry's still remaining, *in situ*, in the Rowe Chapel. There are tablets to James Cæsar Paget, who died, 11th December, 1714; also to a Mr. Edwards, and one to Sir Francis Chester, Bart., who died, 17th December, 1766.

The next name of note is that of Richard de Beauvoir, whose monument, when removed from the old church, was placed in the south-western vestibule at the entrance to the vestry. He was a native of Guernsey, and became a parishioner by the purchase of the Balmes or Baumes Estate in 1696. He died, 17th June, 1708. The estate of about 130 acres (I quote from Simpson) now forms De Beauvoir Town. There is a very striking monument, although small, in memory of Peter Cazalette and Sarah, his wife, French Protestants, who came over with many others on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, 1665. The family have a tomb in the old churchyard. It is noteworthy that many of these refugees settled in Hackney. There is a monument to one Benjamin

Dod, who was killed by a fall from his horse, 1706, aged 32 only; the inscripton is in Latin. The most beautiful piece of sculpture, however, is the Sotheby monument—the work of the celebrated sculptor Roubiliac It is in memory of James Sotheby, of Sewardstone, Essex. He was, as a bold champion of civil and religious liberty, exposed to the resentment of James II., who put him in prison; but on the accession of William III., at the deposition of James, he became personally acquainted with, and was received into the favour of the new sovereign. This tablet was put up by his surviving children, William and Mary, in 1750.[48]

Still lingering within our Mother Parish Church, we find in the south-eastern vestibule fragmentary sepulchral remains, and against the wall several hatchments, *i.e.*, escutcheons of dead persons, generally placed in front of their residences, as we still see them in the aristocratic west of London. Among them may be noticed that of Urswick, which was formerly over his tomb. Of modern monuments the Church has but few, but there is a special interest attaching to one on either side the altar, singularly suggestive of our army and navy, with their respective appropriate emblems. That on the north side of the altar is to the memory of Captain Henry Newcome, R.N.—I presume a descendant of a former vicar, the Rev. Peter Newcome. According to the inscription (which is of the usual verbose style of those times) he died at Madras on 5th March, 1797, in the 37th year of his age—and from the absence of all mention of battles or wounds—of some disease.

On the south side is a corresponding marble structure to the memory of Lieutenant Henry Bingley Sedgwick, only son of the Harry Sedgwick, of Homerton, who planted the churchyard trees. The deceased was in the 5th Regiment of Foot, and was killed by a cannon shot at the siege of Badajos, in Spain, as he was giving orders to his men in one of the trenches, on the 2nd June, 1811, and in the 23rd year of his age. This, as my readers may remember, was one of the most desperately fought battles during the brilliant career of the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsular War. A surviving sister—a Miss Sedgwick—died within the last few years only, at her residence near Ram's Chapel, Homerton, at a great age.[49]

On either side of the above are two cenotaphs headed with coloured armorial bearings, but apparently insignificant in style and appearance to members of the Tyssen-Amherst family On the north side of the east window there is also a tablet to the memory of the Rev. John James Watson, D.D., archdeacon of St. Albans, rector of Hackney, and of Diggeswell, Herts. He died, after a long and lingering illness, on Sunday, 9th June, 1839, having been rector nearly forty years. The fatal seizure was of only four days' duration, and up to that period he was, as far as his frail constitution permitted, taking an active interest in parochial work. It was just at that period that the first steps were being taken to erect other churches in the parish to meet its increased and increasing population; and he was personally engaged in planning out the building of three new churches. It was only on the day before his death that the news was conveyed to him of a large and successful meeting of his parishioners towards the object, when his reply was, "Then I am satisfied." The day of his funeral was a day of mourning for the whole parish, churchmen and nonconformists alike bewailed his loss, called and regarded as he was "the pivot of peace in the parish," and fully accorded to him the impressive eulogy of Bishop Inglis, "The devoutedness of his Christian temper diffused his love very generally around him."

On the other side is a tablet to the memory of Joshua Watson, Esq., brother of the archdeacon. Both were the children of John and Dorothy Watson, the latter died at the age of 51; the father, John Watson, died at Joshua's house in Lower Clapton, in August, 1821, aged 85. Probably no layman of that day, or even in these times, exercised so powerful an influence for good, in Church matters especially, but also in general benevolent schemes. For instance, he was the active lay agent in dealing with the sum of £100,000 voted by Parliament, and the several sums raised by special collections in the churches generally, to procure seed-corn and render other aid to the fearfully impoverished European people, consequent upon the devastating wars of the Great Napoleon, whose dreadful career was closed at Waterloo. To the Archbishop of Canterbury, Manners Sutton, the task of dealing with and distributing this large fund was delegated by the Government, but he felt utterly incompetent for such an accountant's work, and would have declined the task if our noble hearted parishioner, Joshua Watson (who had been strongly recommended to him), had not come to his aid. He made arrangements with the Bank of England, keeping himself clear and exact accounts, and (I quote from Simpson's extracts from Archdeacon Churton's life of Joshua Watson) two hundred and eleven separate grants were made to committees and persons of trust, from Silesia, on the east of Germany, to Hamburg, on the west, vouchers being fully signed and returned for the same, and the entire cost of the distribution was under £100 (one hundred pounds).

We are further told that the aforesaid vouchers were bound together in a book, and are now in the Lambeth Library. He was closely associated with Protestant Missions in India; and St. Augustine's College, Canterbury, to which he gave the greater part of his valuable library. He was treasurer of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; helped forward in their early days, the Bible Society, the Church Missionary Society, the Pastoral Aid, and Additional Curates' Societies, to the latter giving £100 yearly to the day of his death, and was associating himself with Bishop Blomfield, of London, towards the erection of the twelve churches in Bethnal Green. To the National Society's Schools he was a noble contributor, and to the Clergy Orphan School he gave £10,000. In the spring of 1852, he was building a north aisle in Homerton Church, which although but recently built, required enlargement. And thus our fellow-parishioner lived, and loved, and laboured, until the Master Himself called His faithful servant to his sure reward, and from his quaint old house which formerly stood in Lower Clapton, at the corner of Clapton-passage, and opposite the Round Chapel, he received the summons "Come up higher," and surely we may believe the welcome approval from his Lord, "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." He died in 1854, in the 83rd year of his age. On his simple tablet is inscribed "God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdom and knowledge and joy." Eccles. xi., 26.[50]

Space prevents me enlarging on another most worthy man, the Rev. T. O. Goodchild, who succeeded Archdeacon Watson, and who has also a tablet to his memory; he died on 5th September, 1877. Those who knew him most loved him best. He was a genuine, warm-hearted man, free from all cant and humbug (I use these terms advisedly). I was not often associated with him, but to myself he was ever the same, and I have known occasions, and one which is indelibly impressed upon my memory, when, unexpectedly brought by me face to face with a young parishioner who had deeply erred, our good rector and his estimable wife acted nobly (without quoting the incident in Holy Writ), as our Saviour did when He said "Let him that is without sin throw the first stone at her." Of him I say "the memory of the just is blessed."

And now, on this the opening of another year, would I pause awhile and would, if I could, have taken my readers with me to stand, as I did the other morning, in front of that chancel in our Parish Church. What a rush of memories of all kinds passed through my solemnized spirit. Was it nothing to stand and gaze on a spot hallowed by the incidents associated with even one solitary life of over three score years and ten, and in that hallowed fane, ere I passed into the cold and cheerless churchyard, to recall the many and varied scenes so intimately associated with life's history. Those altar rails where the young and the blooming brides took upon themselves the all-important vows of married responsibility—the central aisle, where in solemn silence our dead were laid for a short while, ere the dust was returned to the earth as it was, "while the spirit of our loved ones had returned to God who gave it" —and, passing westward, that simple font, where first our children were dedicated to God and His service. Well did Charles Wesley write—

"Lo! God is here, let us adore
And own how dreadful is this place;
Let all within us feel His power,
And silent bow before His face."

and Isaac Watts—

"In every new distress,
We'll to His House repair;
We'll think upon His wondrous grace,
And seek deliverance there."

CHAPTER XII.

Papers, xxxiv., xxxv., xxxvi.

PASSING into the churchyard one cannot but notice its extent, and observe that had every portion of it been fully occupied, viz., that now a pleasure space on the north of the church, and those portions on the east and west of Churchwell-path, which were being taken up for interments just before the closure of the churchyard against fresh graves and vaults by the recent Act of Parliament, it would most certainly have been the largest churchyard in the metropolis; I believe its first laying out and planting caused it to be likened at one time to the noted Pere la Chaise in Paris, and I have the impression that it formed the pattern, as it was most certainly the predecessor of the many cemeteries which far and near supply the funereal wants of our great city. I regret the lack of interest that is here too apparent of the families whose dead are deposited, and would venture, in the spirit of an honest chronicler, to suggest to the many who are still living in the parish, and even to those who may have left our neighbourhood, that one tithe of the attention shown by ourselves to those tombs and graves we have been compelled to secure in the cemeteries, should be paid to our loved, or once loved, ancestry in Hackney Churchyard.

May I urge the many of my readers whom this may concern, to make a beginning in this the opening month of the new year. Why should we so soon forget, or lose our interest in, the sleeping dust of those who nurtured, loved and cherished us in our earliest helpless years? The Jews in our Lord's time conjectured that Martha and Mary had gone to their brother's (Lazarus) tomb to weep there, and, while I am not a particular admirer of French manners and customs, I must commend them for their annual visit to their family graves on "All Souls' Day," and refer especially to a noteworthy incident in the life of our great evangelist, the Rev. John Wesley, who, amidst all the laborious preaching, and travelling in days, 150 years ago, when travelling on horseback, or in roughly-constructed carriages and along still worse roads, and not by the rapid, cheap transit on smooth railways as we now have, could find time to turn aside to that little out-of-the-way north Lincolnshire town of Epworth to visit, not the Rectory, but his father's grave, and, it is also said, never stood by it except bareheaded. Surely such conduct is not fantastical. Why should we not visit the hallowed spot where those dear ones rest, who once so much loved us, and whom even we professed to love while they remained with us, and perchance shed floods of tears over their opened graves?

I find that the first gravestone erected in this newer churchyard is to the memory of Ann, daughter of James and Elizabeth Brown, who died 1st March, 1798, aged 5 years and 5 months. Again, another gravestone is to the memory of Thomas Bell, of this parish, a lieutenant in the Honourable Artillery Company, who died suddenly at the Amoury House, Finsbury-square, on the 23rd November, 1826, and who was, by command of the colonel, H.R.H. the Duke of Sussex (uncle of our Queen), buried with full military honours. I well recollect that funeral procession as it passed up Mare-street; but also call to mind that as a little child, I was more frightened than interested in its solemn pomp and music. Among other tombs and graves are those of Sir Daniel Williams, of Stamford Hill, (colonel), Colonel John Castle Gant, and George Edgar, Quartermaster-Sergeant, all of the 1st Royal Tower Hamlets Militia, and Captain William Carter, of the 2nd Tower Hamlets Militia, also Lieut.-Colonel Alex. Saunderson, of the 69th Regiment of Foot, and Lieut.-Colonel James Poole, of the Scots Greys, who distinguished himself in the battle of Waterloo, and died in 1817, aged 40.

In the days when the three-decker, as it was latterly called, was the pulpit arrangement in our Parish Church, the clerk occupying the lowest tier, the best-looking of the three officials was for some years our parish clerk, with his handsome, florid face, and preternaturally whitened hair. His memory must be still green with those of my generation, and his kindly services when required for baptisms, marriages, or funerals be scarcely forgotten, and we note with painful surprise his memorial (in our survey), as for William Jackson, died April 16, 1840, aged 57 only. He had a bookseller's shop, almost on the borders of the Brook in Church-street, somewhere what is now No. 341, Mare-street—the shop which was afterwards Mr. Barker's. On the south side of the church are the vaults of Colonel Beaufoy, of Hackney Wick—his mansion was there, I believe, afterwards a school—of the Watson family, beginning with John and Dorothy Watson, of Homerton, pointed out in Homerton whose house I persume is already forgotten, and of the Rev. T. O. Goodchild.[51]

On the south side of the public path leading from the old tower to Sutton-place may be discovered the unpretentious grave of the late Rev. Prebendary Griffith, who was for 42 years the minister of Ram's (Proprietary) Chapel in Homerton, of which more anon. Prebendary Griffith was a man of singularly unobtrusive character; yet as a sound preacher, and a theological writer, few could surpass him, and for years his congregation was large, wealthy, and influential. He had originally come from Brading, in the Isle of Wight, at which church he officiated for awhile. My readers will remember it, and its interesting little churchyard, as associated with those touching narratives, by the late Rev. Leigh Richmond, of "Little Jane," &c., &c. Among the peculiar traits of Mr. Griffith's character, was that of adhering to things as they were (that is if he thought no good could be accomplished by any change). For instance, on more than one occasion propositions were made and submitted to him for enlarging, altering, or rebuilding the chapel, but he courteously pronounced against the schemes. Again long after the churches of England generally had adopted the more modern Hymnals in their worship, he still adhered to the metrical version of the psalms aforetime attached to the Book of Common Prayer. Another trait was his strict observance of, and obedience to the laws of the land, and even of the parish, especially where the general welfare of the community was concerned.

Of this I cannot refrain from giving one striking instance. Malignant disease had entered the family circle and striken down a favourite daughter, who died after a very short illness. Orders then were that the bodies of such should be at once removed to the mortuary, then recently opened in our old tower. Sternly and strictly the mandate was obeyed, there for a short while the body of his loved child rested, and from thence the funeral procession started, he being the chief mourner, and the service as rendered at the grave only, was there performed, the body not entering the church. This daughter "Ilda" died on 15th Nov., 1875. Prebendary Griffith himself passed away on the 24th August, 1883, in the 86th year of his age. His daughters who survived him have well sustained their departed father's reputation, and to the young especially have proved a blessing in the neighbourhood.

On the west side of the church is the vault of Dr. Samuel Pett, who lived and died at the house now occupied by R. Voss, Esq., in Clapton-square; he died, as I have heard, from blood poisoning at the *post mortem* of a patient, who had died from the same cause, on the 1st Jan., 1823. I have been informed by the dwellers in Clapton-square at that period, that he had become so popular as a physician, that the number of carriages which followed the hearse was so great, that the procession making the circuit of Clapton-square, and the carriage drive to the west door of the church, had returned to the house again before the last of the mourners had left it. In closing this paper I will change the tone of it by an amusing coincidence at the church on one Sunday morning. Two notabilities, each staying for the time in Clapton-square, attended the morning service, viz., Sir Harry Smith, fresh from his victories in the Cape Caffre war, for which he had been knighted, and the Rev. Dr. Lee, who had just been created the first Bishop of Manchester. Each being connected with Hackney, of course the congregation were in a bit of a fluster. The organist, the late Mr. Terry, most appropriately saluted each by giving "See the conquering hero comes," as the opening voluntary, and, "The priests' march of the Israelites," at the close.[52]

Entering the churchyard by the north-western gateway, and proceeding along the narrow pathway skirting the police-station premises, we come to the new Coroner's Court and Mortuary. Opposite these will be noted, in a triangular-shaped plot, a tombstone shaped as a plain cross. It records the death, on 10th September, 1842, of a Mr. Triebner, aged 64, of Mare-street, Hackney, and on the foot-stone is a verse from the Latin Vulgate edition of the Bible. I name this because it was at the time occasion for almost a holy war in the parish, the erection of a tombstone so shaped, and its Popish inscription, rousing the keenest excitement in the Protestant mind. The rector was implored to prohibit it—nay, almost threatened with an action in the Ecclesiastical Courts; and doubtless, had the *Mercury* and its local contemporaries been running in those days, "special editions" and special call boys would have been in fullest requisition. However, the storm at length subsided, and now, in this very churchyard, and extensively in the cemeteries, this style of tombstone, and many still more of the veri-similitude type meet the eye, and are either tacitly adopted, or as readily accepted, while the religious public generally are disposed to regard this marked symbol of our Faith, and of the Faith of our (earliest) fathers, as more consonant with a Christian's memorial than the many more gorgeous sepulchres which are oft-times intensely Pagan.

Among those who are sleeping their last long sleep among the many vaults, is a young man, once a bank clerk, whose crime, forgery, brought him to the gallows just within my time, his body being given up to his family and here resting with them, all having passed away. It is a mercy to think that this Draconian law has been removed from our Statute Book. He was one of the latest, if not the last victim. About the centre of the southern portion of the churchyard is a memorial stone with the following inscription only:—"E.E. Died 10th day of June, 1842, aged 80 years."* This marks the resting place of Viscount Creighton, Earl Erne, who had been a patient, and detained there for many years, in Brooke House Asylum, Clapton. It is not many years ago that another nobleman (Lord Kingston), who had rendered himself painfully notorious (from no fault of his own), passed away after some years of insanity, in the same well ordered establishment; and I call to mind, as proving that the world is as socially as it is physically round, that a most worthy and very aged lady (the lineal descendant of one of our parochial great ones, *i.e.*, of the "upper ten," who was a resident in Hackney nearly two hundred years ago), ended her days in a state of imbecility in the same house only a few years ago.[53]

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* Earl Erne's title is from "Lough Erne," a chain of waters running through Fermanagh, a county in Ireland. Within four miles of its capital town "Enniskillen," is a small lake called "Loch Erne"—in it an Islet called "Davenish,"—the Irish for "the Isle of David." On this is an ancient cemetery, in which is one of those marvellous old round towers, and near by a tomb hewn out of the solid rock, called from time immemorial, "The tomb of the Prophet Jeremiah." Why?

This brings under my purview a yet more notorious character, who, after figuring as the cynosure of Hertfordshire and the adjacent counties for some twenty-five years, found his last resting place in our churchyard. His history is so peculiarly striking that I must give it, and as briefly as possible. I ought to premise that after long search for it, I at last wrote the postmaster at Stevenage, and through his courteous and prompt attention, I am able to give the following account of "Mad Lucas," as some called him, and others "The hermit of Hertfordshire." The family vault, which is that of Philip Monoux Lucas, Esq. (whose marble tablet is on the staircase leading from the north-east vestibule to the gallery, in the church itself), is situated on the eastern side of the church, and can be readily seen when standing under the east window. He died on 27th November, 1830, aged 52. His eldest son was James Lucas, whose eccentricities, whether madness, or some extravagant development of mono-mania, have rendered him notorious. His father, above named, was of the firm of Chauncey, Lucas and Lang, of Liverpool, and was the wealthy owner of large sugar plantations in the West Indies. He was, of course, a slave-owner, and the glorious Emancipation Act of our British Government occasioned him serious loss, although he was still a very rich man. The mother of James Lucas was a Liverpool lady, named Beesley, also of a wealthy family. He had one brother and two sisters, but as the eldest he was heir-at-law to their extensive property in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire. His brother George was "brought up to the law," but never practised, being also wealthy. One of his sisters (now buried in the same vault) married Count de Taafe, of a high Austrian family (I presume nearly related to the present Minister-President of the Austrian Council of State). The other sister married a London solicitor named Walker, who died in 1872, worth more than £500,000.

The family residence was Elmwood House, Redcoat's Green, Great Wymondley, between Stevenage and Hitchin. Not far from it was a Nonconformist College (now removed), where, among others, our former parishioner, the Rev. Dr. Binney, was a student. James Lucas came with his parents to Elmwood House when only ten years old, even then noted as a strange child, having fits of solitude; as he grew older becoming froward and wilful. He was educated at a private school at Clapham, and was afterwards placed, as a medical student, with a country doctor. At this time he cultivated his personal appearance, and was gentlemanly and courteous in manner, the only peculiarity being that he allowed his hair to grow inordinately long.

The blow which produced his absolute mental derangement was the death of his mother, to whom he was passionately attached. She died in October, 1849, and he became inconsolable. He would not suffer the body to be buried, but having had it strongly coffined, he sat at its head night and day for thirteen weeks, as a silent watcher. The law at last interfered, and its enforcement took place in our churchyard. From thence his entire retirement dates. He resigned his chairmanship of the Imperial Gas Company, and shut himself off from all society. He conceived a mortal hatred for his brother George, and refused altogether to deal with the estate for the benefit of his brother and sisters. All were compelled to leave him, one by one, then he closed up all the rooms in the house, had the windows barricaded with heavy cross-timbers, and confined himself entirely to the kitchen, where he lived day and night, his only raiment a blanket, his bed a heap of cinders, which gradually accumulated during his twenty-five years' seclusion, as he kept a fire burning night and day. His hair was unkempt, his body unwashed, rendering him a most pitiable object, and scarcely human. He lived chiefly on bread, milk and eggs, which were brought to him day by day.

Everything belonging to his deceased mother was left intact, and the bedrooms and their contents were left to tumble to pieces, which for the most part they did, even the roofs and floorings giving way. The carriage rotted in the coach-house, and the horses were placed on a neighbouring farm, where they died of old age. With an income of thousands of pounds, he lived on less than £300 a year. Latterly he felt compelled to engage a day and a night watchman, for his own protection. Of course, people from far and near came to interview him, only seeing him from the outside. He was tolerably courteous to them, but to children particularly kind, giving them sweatmeats and the like. To tramps he gave advice and money; none were sent empty away. Although a Protestant, he gave but *one* penny to such, while to a Roman Catholic he would give *three*-pence. He would not acknowledge our Hanoverian line of sovereigns, but was a thorough Jacobite, and with these views would never use a stamp himself.

In brief, after twenty-five years of this life, he was found on the morning of the 17th April, 1874, in a fit, and was at once removed to a farm-house close by, where he died on the following day, in the 63rd year of his age. His body was removed to his brother's house in Marylebone-road. From thence it was brought to our churchyard on Saturday, 25th April, 1874, followed by the one brother, as the only mourner. The pamphlet, from which the above are brief excerpta, is published by Messrs. Paternoster and Hales, Hitchin. They add that our sexton, who had been busily engaged at this funeral, dropped dead in the church porch very shortly after.

While not wishing to detract for one moment from the good qualities of the Philip Monoux Lucas' family, or calling in question the merits of its founder, as set forth by his loving widow, in the marble tablet in the church (even though love be often blind) the peculiarities of his son James, as given in my last paper, render it absolutely necessary that I should state that they have no connection with or relation to the Lucas family, who, first in Hackney, and subsequently in Clapton, have lived and laboured amongst us, and have done good service to our parish and its charities, which I imagine the others never did.

In concluding my ramble through the churchyard I would direct attention to the last resting place of good John Simpson, J.P., father of the R. Simpson whose memorials of St. John-at-Hackney are so deeply interesting, and whose sons I valued as "chums" in my school-boy days. The vault near the north-eastern gateway has on it that it was erected by his children; and a loving family they were. Along that vault-lined pathway from the entrance into the Church-well-path itself are the memorials, and rest the dust of many who bore a good name, and did good work in our parish from 1790 to almost the present time. Among them was the Rev. Thomas Cornthwaite, who preceded Archdeacon Watson as rector, dying in 1799 aged 79, and leaving in perpetuity a small annual dole to the poor.

We have also the family vault of the Loddiges family, of horticultural fame, proprietors of Loddiges gardens, and still freeholders in Hackney. Also Vice-Admiral (of the red) John Hunter, formerly governor of New South Wales, and who with Governor Phillip formed the first settlement there; he died 13th March, 1821, aged 83, after sixty-eight years service all over the world—an old sea-dog. Close to the Lucas vault is that of Isaac Hensley, many years resident in the White House at the corner of Urswick-road, and the last of the "five houses" which mansion has only recently been pulled down. His estate comprised all the ground on which Portland place now stands, and the land extending to Sutton-place; and forming the boundary on the west of Urswick-road to the churchyard, were his two fields. He was the head of a large and flourishing family for many years resident in Hackney; and it is a fact worth noting, as showing how easily by inter-marriages the middle class are linked with the "upper ten," that his great grandchildren, still resident among us, bear an equal relation to our old parishioner, that the present Lord Settrington (grandson and heir to the Duke of Richmond and Gordon) does. Another old resident, whose family—once much known amongst us, have, I think, left us altogether—is found here interred, the Rev. Dr. Heathcote, who died 14th April, 1820, aged 51 only.[54]

Passing out of the churchyard from the new to the old, and thence by the old tower, once more I am tempted to mention "a find" in the latter. When a short while ago in company with our excellent Tyssen librarian, Mr. Chambers, and brother antiquarians Bradford and Ivatts, I visited the old tower to examine the Dean vault, Mr. Chambers called our attention to some strange lumber in what was the bell-ringers' chamber. One article was a stage on wheels, small iron wheels about nine inches diameter; there had been four wheels, but only one seemed perfect; on the platform was a rough plank seat, in front of this was a frame work of stout wood about three feet high with one crosspiece, supported by four uprights, all strongly put together. Half-way up the two inner uprights were on each side a pair of handcuffs let into the wood, and along the upper border of the crosspiece three pairs of the same. One only solution as to the use of this mysterious engine could be arrived at, and that was that here was the identical "whipping post" ordered by the Vestry on the 17th May, 1630.

As if to confirm our surmise, there, lying on the ground, was a still more mysterious article—in shape like the old-fashioned stretcher used by the police before the more convenient and comfortable ambulance was invented. It was made of very stout materials, but instead of the canvas, which formed the bottom of the stretcher, it had open iron rails placed edgeways, lattice fashion, and the framework was studded with sundry iron rails, bent and straight, with iron loops to which stout cords could be fixed, so that the culprit so placed and secured had not a chance of shifting his or her position. Here then, I conjectured, must be the "Coocking Stoole," as so described—or cucking stool—and I venture to infer that as the only stream in which the punishment could be applied was the Hackney Brook close by, with scarcely two feet average depth, this form of appliance was the only one which could ensure the victim an adequate ducking; the stool or chair suspended from a lever, as depicted in ancient engravings, requiring a depth of at least six feet of water to render the punishment free from risk to life or limb. I hope our Tyssen Librarian will soon become custodian of these relics of former punishment, while at the same time I would as fervently desire that wife-beaters, children-starvers, garrotters, and animal torturers should have an adequate dose of both or either.[55]

We find ourselves once again in the main street, the highway from London and country-wards. Confining our comments chiefly to the eastern side of the road, but recently known as Church-street, but now throughout its entire length called Mare-street, we find some few remains of the earlier dwellings of Hackney; many have been considerably altered, and within another generation all will have disappeared. In the case of our village we find that the inhabitants and their houses first clustered around the church, not only as the one centre of divine worship, and its several sacred ordinances affecting man's course from the cradle to the grave, but as we have reason to believe in our former notice of the Old Tower, and its fortress-like construction by the Knights Hospitallers, that, on the score of safety alone, in times when every man did that which he deemed right in his own eyes, they sought protection from possible enemies, and in every way felt safest near the church. Hence, unlike what is often observed in rural districts, the church still continues the centre of a populous district; and the rapid approach of the metropolitan local trade, and residences, until we of Hackney find ourselves enclosed within what is now termed "Greater London," has preserved the population of this part of the parish. Doubtless several of the houses, all now shops, were private residences, and what few remain unaltered may be about 200 or 250 years old, their pretty detached gardens (now business yards and out-buildings) backing on to the original Church Field, as they now do to the churchyard. The first house from the rectory, going northwards, was formerly a corn-chandler's —if I remember aright, named Richards, one of the successors of our old friend, William Jackson, as Parish Clerk.

We next come to the "Old Mermaid." How old the original public house was I cannot say, but there is a brass token, still extant, with a mermaid, looking-glass in hand, on the obverse, and "Tavern in Hackney," with the letters ${}_{1}{}^{\mathrm{P}}_{\mathrm{M}}$. in the centre, undated, but probably issued about the time of such tokens—from 1620 to 1680 and at the earlier date. We then come to a row of shops, once, as I have said, private houses, and houses which have been divided into two or more separate tenements; our ancestors, unlike the architects and builders of the present day, not so boldly obtruding on the sky-line as to render "lifts" absolutely necessary, unless one was prepared to devote a considerable portion of the day, and tax one's strength also, in scoring the steps which lead from the ground level to the attic. At about the spot where Mr. Coventry's shop now stands was an open space, in which some ancient buildings—a part used when I was a boy as an auction room—and beyond that enclosure a large stonemason's yard, kept by Mr. Perry, next to which were the churchyard gates as they now stand. Of this plot and its surroundings, more in my next.[56]

CHAPTER XIII.

(PAPERS, XXXVII., XXXVIII., XXXIX.)

LOOKING along the frontage line of the houses and shops extending from the churchyard to Dalston-corner, we have a very clear demonstration of the alteration made by setting back the eastern line of this part of the street at the time of the levelling the Church House, and building what is now the Old Town Hall, which many more than the writer fervently trust will soon become a thing of the past. From the churchyard to the Old Mermaid this widening was effected, and from thence we are again on the original unaltered roadway.

Pursuing our course, but keeping the frontage line steadily in view, we come to an abrupt termination of the houses attached to those shops at an upholsterer's. Then the dwelling houses stand very far back, while the shops are still brought out to the front, and are so carried until we come to the Police Station, and the public house adjoining. Now the whole of this plot was occupied by a very remarkable looking structure, and a large stonemason's yard, kept by an old and worthy parishioner named Perry, and his premises were carried up to the churchyard wall. The structure to which I have referred was pulled down between 1825-7, and I have a vivid recollection of its peculiar style; engravings of it are easily obtained, and as a Hackney antiquity, are well worth obtaining. Its origin is buried in the mists of comparatively recent antiquity—so universal a peculiarity in this our ancient village—the latest ancient structure, which was in the Italian style, having more projecting bays, and might date from Henry VIII. or Elizabeth. From the prints extant it seems to have been a tall building of three storeys, each being elaborately ornamented with Ionic columns supporting entablatures, and broken pediments. Most probably it had a flattened roof surrounded and ornamented with a balustrade or open stonework parapet.[57]

Dr. Robinson (from whom I borrowed this more technical description) adds that there is a house still standing in Rochester of like style, and also that Thornbury Castle, in Gloucestershire, built by Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, in 1511, is like it and is described as "style late perpendicular." About 1750 the old house was used as a tavern and named the "Blue Posts," and after a while, in the uneuphonious style so common in the days of Hogarth, "Bob's Hall," and dominating, as doubtless the first original, and most ancient structure may have done, the road from that corner to the five houses, that part of the road was called "Bob's Hall-Lane." About 1777 a Mr. Wright was the landlord, and built a large room which was often used as an assembly room, and to this room Vestry meetings were sometimes adjourned, and before its erection, to the tavern itself. Thus we find in the Vestry minutes, under date 4th April, 1738, that because a Henry Godwin, not being a vestryman, would come and interrupt the meeting (there were no police then) the meeting was adjourned to the Blue Posts Tavern—then kept by a Mr. Robert Howarth—and 5s. was paid for the use of the room. The last tavern-keeper was probably a Mr. Bunn, who shortly after moved over the way to the "Mermaid" (not the Old Mermaid), of which I shall write farther on.[58]

It was then let in separate tenements, twenty families occupying it at one time. The large room was kept up after the tavern had been removed, and was used as an auction room by Messrs. Musgrove and Butts, the former becoming subsequently a Sheriff of London and Middlesex, Alderman, and Lord Mayor, and dying at a great age near Tunbridge Wells as "Sir John Musgrove, Bart." He was formerly much indentified with, and an influential supporter of Ram's Chapel (Homerton), its charities and Schools. My memory serves me to state as an amusing coincidence, or rather, I should say, an adherence to names and styles, that from the "Blue Posts" ran for some time a stage coach painted blue, being the pioneer of the cross-road route to the West End (subsequently maintained, and in first rate style too, by the late Mr. Kendall, of Dalston). This stage made two journeys daily, its route being Dalston-lane, Ball's Pond-road, Lower-road, Islington, to the "Angel," and thence across Clerkenwell, down Gray's Inn-road to the "Blue Posts," Middle-row, Holborn, close to the ancient Staple's Inn.[59]

In the auction room for some while a choral society met for practice, if I remember aright ladies did not form part of such gatherings, and it was by the aid of small boys, such as I then was, that the soprano parts were taken. I cannot refrain from naming the late Mr. Whitehouse, formerly of Church-street, as one of that society, his exquisite alto voice was a delight to all of us. What would our choral and even orchestral societies do without the ladies now? A good old countryman once said to me that he thought "the reason why all angels seemed to be depicted as women, was because they had such sweet voices." (This very much by the way.)[60]

I am not yet satisfied about the antiquarian past of this Templar's House. We owe the Knight-Templars a good deal; they were (certainly originally) Christians in thought, word, and deed, and in their earliest days gave abundant proof of it, going first as pilgrims to the Holy Land while it was under the rule of Baldwin III., A.D. 1117. They banded themselves together to help all those who were in distress, or otherwise helpless; and did good service against the many robbers who molested and even murdered the pilgrims. Under Pope Honorius II., they were formed into an Order and residence given them by Baldwin in his palace at Jerusalem, close to where Solomon's Temple once stood; hence their title "Templars." In the reign of Henry II., they built the Temple in Fleet-street. When the Order was abolished, all their metropolitan possessions were handed over to the "Knights of St. John of Jerusalem," and to their Priory in Clerkenwell, the ancient gateway of which still stands in John-street, Clerkenwell, and is well worth a visit. When this latter Order was in turn dissolved, Henry VIII distributed many of their houses and estates among his followers; and hence this house having been bestowed on Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, he took up his residence there, thus becoming a Hackney parishioner, and probably died there in 1537.* I know not whether the excavations necessitated for the foundations of the present houses and shops, revealed anything; perhaps my readers, better informed than I am, will kindly advise me. Of this I am sure, judging by analogy, and by the more immediate ecclesiastical surroundings, and by the fortress-like style of our old tower, this spot was the place of their first habitation; while on the other hand the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, a younger Order, and therefore coming into our parish afterwards, fixed their head quarters at their Priory (now Priory-gardens), in Well-street, South Hackney.

As I look for, and much appreciate, corrections in these papers (so dependent as they are upon my memory), I cannot close this paper without adverting to the kindly criticism of your correspondent "G." I thought Sir Harry Smith was a Hackney man, and stand corrected, but I knew of his doings at Aliwal, and that his honours date from that, but on the occasion in question he had just come from the Caffre war. It so happens that on the re-embodiment of the King's Own Tower Hamlets Militia, I was associated first with the newly-appointed adjutant, the late Captain Gray, who won his laurels in the same Caffre war, and with our Sergt.-major, (who had been much longer on the staff), and gained his in those Sikh battles, and notably at Aliwal; and in the latter engagement he casually named the fearful slaughter around the colours of his regiment, and the prowess of a Hackney boy—one of my closest friends and schoolfellows at the Hackney Church of England School—Heathfield Frampton, a nephew of old Dr. Frampton, living in Well-street 1830. Two ensigns had been shot down, colours in hand—(the Sikhs were good shots)—Lieut. Frampton seized the Queen's colours, and had hardly raised it when his left arm was shattered, and helped by my informant, his limb was removed on the battlefield. But Heathfield (plucky dog as he always was) was not done with yet; as Major Frampton he went with his regiment to the Crimea. Then he happened to get into one of the most advanced posts in the trenches, a sudden rally of the Russians caught him and a brother officer, one Captain Clarke. His one arm secured him and his comrade instant quarter, and protection. Once within the Russian lines, so great was the interest felt by the enemy for him, that they two were speedly sent to St. Petersburg itself, where they were literally fêted by the emperor and his family, and eventually released on parole. My friend has joined the great majority.

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*If not in Brooke House, Upper Clapton.

Starting once more from what were the banks of the Hackney Brook, say 150 years ago, when bridged footways on either side carried the public pathway along Church-street, and the stream, quite opened to view, trickled sweetly and full clearly across the road in dry weather, but rapidly changed to a deep and furious torrent when storms along the north-western heights of Highgate and Hampstead poured down their flood waters. It was no uncommon circumstance in those days for the dwellers in Clapton to be stopped in their carriages, or on their horses, from the almost unfordable character of these freshets; and leaving them at hostelries hard by, pursue their journey as best they could, to the then distant great city. In my earlier years I heard many tales from the travellers themselves to the above effect, when the building of the bridge and its value for traffic uninterrupted was named.

But will my readers for a moment recall the picture of our Old Hackney at that time, and then compare it with the present hideous interruption (however useful it may be) to the landscape and the sky-line; and doubtless wonder, while they do so, at the distorted judgment of our "conscript fathers" who sanctioned such a distortion to the view of the "heart of old Hackney." I grant an act in which a greater council (as it is thought), I mean the Court of Common Council of the City of London, in permitting the "decussation" of Ludgate Hill, in like inglorious manner, forms a sequent, not a precedent. Heaven help them, and may they be wiser in time to come.

Where the tavern, facing the North London Railway Station stands, the bridge, which in my time covered the whole roadway, had a low wall, over which we could see the stream coming down, forming a boundary line between Mr. Nelme's field and grounds, and the Mermaid gardens; passing northward, we had a stationer's (the church stationer's) shop, kept erewhile by a former parish clerk—Mr. Jackson (before named)—and, latterly, by an old schoolmate, still happily in the land of the living, Mr. Robert Barker. Turning the corner was the "Eight Bells" Tavern, of which I know but little, but the natural inference would be that its proximity to the old church, and its sign, would prove it to be the bell-ringers' resort, and where, before they rang the old year out and the new year in, they would quaff their mulled beer, to warm them up to their work in the old tower, and perchance make the "Wild bells ring out yet wilder still." Within a very few doors of this tavern was one much older, and so striking was its appearance in the eyes of an antiquary, that one cannot but regret that the exigencies of its position and condition rendered its removal imperative. This I presume. Its history, as far as it can be gathered, is interesting. It was most probably coeval with the rebuilding, alteration and enlargement of the church, and its sign, "The Three Cranes," it is said, ought to have been "Herons," for the arms of the rebuilder of the old church (who was Sir Thomas Heron, Master of the Jewel House to King Henry VIII., before named), were engraved upon every pillar, viz., "a chevron ermin between three herons," and the legend is that the public house was erected for the use of the many workmen employed on the church. My own impression is that such may have been the fact, although its appearance was consonant with one hundred years still farther back.[61]

The whole plot on which these several buildings stood now forms the ground plan of the extensive premises of Messrs. M. Rose and Sons, with one or two shops, and the large public house, "The Railway Tavern." Passing onwards, we had a first-class butcher's shop, then a Mr. Hill's, tailor, and the late Mr. Monk's, one of our old-fashioned undertakers, who has long since required those services for himself which he so ably rendered for others. The shop now occupied by Mr. Axtens is the successor of one of the oldest and leading linendrapers in Hackney —I believe the present house was erected, and the business established, by a Mr. Robert Barker, more than sixty years ago. A more genial and gentlemanly man I never knew, and his shop was the favourite resort of the ladies of those days. Retiring, he lived on his well-earned fortune several years after in his native county, Norfolk. His immediate successor, also retired, was very much of like character, and if I am rightly informed, one of their sons is well on for the "silk," as a barrister, and may yet be found, if not on the Bench, a man of mark in the House of Commons. Some other shops, less noteworthy but equally creditable, bring us to what was the site of the "Mermaid" Tavern, nearly opposite the "Old Mermaid." The tavern came well to the front, and was at one time a very popular place of resort.[62]

Dr. Robinson tells us that in the year 1744 a Mr. Holmes, who had been many years its proprietor, died there. At the back was the Assembly Room — still standing—and around this were extensive gardens and grounds tastefully laid out with lawns, formerly used for an Archery Club, and latterly for a bowling green. Through a portion of the grounds a branch of the Hackney Brook—if not the Brook itself (then a purling crystal stream) meandered, and added to its picturesque surroundings; there was also a Dark-walk (as it was called) which encompassed the kitchen garden, and was entirely shaded with trees, while another avenue, known as lovers' walk, lined with dwarfed lime trees, passed due south to the end of the gardens. A portion of this row of trees still remains, although very much away from its original associations. Inquirers after this relic of past days may see it from the top of Aspland-grove, just within the garden wall on the right hand side of that road.[63]

The Assembly room was largely used for subscription balls and the like one hundred years ago; also for public meetings, being the only hall in the entire parish, which, as neutral ground, could be used by all sorts and conditions of men, either in science, religion, or politics. Here also were the temporary head-quarters of the King's Own Light Infantry Tower Hamlets Militia, during their occasional training. To these gardens came, from time to time during the summer months, sundry Guild Companies and clubs, for their annual outing and festive recreation. These several communities made a rare show and public stir when marching from the City in procession, with their full regalia, enormous but beautifully bedizened banners requiring the help of nearly a dozen standard bearers to maintain their elevation, with military bands in due style accompanying them. And I well remember, in the case of the City Armourer's Company and one or two others, with mounted men, armed "cap-a-pie" in steel or brass or other armour (really genuine), which, as the immortal Pepys would have said, "was wondrous to behold." All these several gatherings had their properly apportioned day for assembling and marching to the Mermaid Gardens, which were duly prepared for their reception.

All that glory has departed, and was one among the many causes which swept our pleasure gardens away, to make room for the more profitable occupation of the land, as we now see it, by the speculative builder. Among other sights and scenes, the remembrance of which still clings to me, and probably to other old Hackney residents, were the balloon ascents. One of the first recorded is that of Mr. Sadler, one of the earliest English aeronauts, who ascended in his balloon accompanied by a Captain Paget, on the 10th of August, 1811. It is said that the attraction was so great that besides a large assemblage in the Mermaid Gardens themselves, the road from London to Hackney was thronged with all sorts of carriages. A print of Sadler's ascent, from a drawing taken on the spot, is still extant. In after-time the celebrated and always successful aeronaut of Tottenham, Mr. Green, made more than one ascent from the same spot. I remember witnessing two, one in the gardens themselves, the other from our old tower, and if memory serves me aright on that occasion the aerial voyagers were brought rather nearer to us—the elevated sight-seers—than was pleasant to themselves or absolutely agreeable to us, for in days when "parachute exhibitions" were unknown, and many another fool-hardy experiment was (as it ought to be now) in limbo or elsewhere, the idea of a topple over from such a height was not desired, either by the aeronauts themselves, or by their excited observers.[64]

To those who have been but thirty years or so resident in Hackney the Mermaid Gardens may appear almost mythical, and even to myself at this moment something difficult to trace. This I will endeavour to do. Starting from the entrance door of the London and County Bank, and following the right hand garden wall down Aspland-grove to the end of the dwarf lime trees, thence taking a line along the bottom of the gardens of the houses on the south side of Amhurst-road until we come opposite to Kenmure-road, following that road up to the eastern end of the Manor Room premises, and thence drawing a line to pass midway between the backs of the houses (Messrs Axtens and others), taking in all Brett-road until the London and County Bank is again reached, we fairly encompass the old grounds. The original tavern was taken down and replaced by a good substantial dwelling house, the frontage of which is still to be seen in Mare-street, although now divided, and with shops in the frontage being Nos. 378 and 378A, Mare-street.

For some years a long covered passage led from Mare-street to the Manor Rooms, and for some time the Hackney Literary Institution had its seat there. During the later years of the former Lord of the Manor, the house was occupied by his brother, John Robert Daniel Tyssen, Esq., who acted as steward of the Manor, and who was, I may without exaggeration state, one of the most popular men in the district. Personally I had the highest esteem for him, and his genial, open-hearted style, coupled, I acknowledge, with a similarity of taste, especially on archæological questions, rendered his society most enjoyable. After he left Hackney for Brighton, where he resided until death, we occasionally met at the gatherings of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society of which he was an influential member, and the library now in our Town Hall was more than once viewed by me in its master's home at the Manor House. Mr. Tyssen was a good working parishioner, identifying himself with many local charities and schemes, and as chairman of the Hackney Board of Guardians, with the late Charles Horton Pulley as Clerk, good efficient service was rendered, and the machinery, at a much smaller cost than the present (although I admit times are much altered and pauperism has much increased), worked admirably; whilst to use an old coaching phrase, our chairman tooled his team with well held reins and little whip. In fact, our old and valued friend was as much liked by the poor as by the rich. *Requiescat in pace.* Mr. Tyssen came to the Manor House in 1845, and left for Brighton in 1858. It may not be generally known that a recent rector of South Hackney, who now holds a vicarage in Brighton, is one of Mr. Tyssen's sons.[65]

Leaving the Manor House and rooms we pass a few more shops and come to what is now called Kenmure-road, but from earliest times, until this last change of name, it was known as Cold Bath-lane, latterly a rather queer sort of a place, with old tumble-down cottages, the houses of a not much better population. As this lane originally led down to the Hackney Brook it is no extravagant surmise that a bath or baths at one time existed on its banks. Not very far away, a few yards higher up the stream, were fish ponds, and as was customary in earlier days, and is now done where the stream is pure in other localities, its water diverted here and there along its course, supplied many a pond, and probably bathing place, with small loss to its purity and volume.

Proceeding northwards we come to a row of well-built houses with good shops, numbering from 499 to 419, Mare-street. These stand on the site of a very large mansion, plain to ugliness, built by a notorious character named Ward, about 1710, in the reign of Queen Anne. Ward was at one time a Member of Parliament for Melcombe Regis, and his deeds in the financial world are scarcely eclipsed by the present day swindlers in London, Paris, and elsewhere. The mansion, built of a dull red brick, was square in all its details, consisting of a central portion standing well back from the road, and a wing on either side almost flush with the pavement. The centre and south wing had tall stout iron railings before them, the north wing forming the corner of Dalston-lane was flush with the public path. The iron railings were evidently wrought, and bespoke, as their origin, the now extinct iron working in Sussex. Behind was an extensive and beautiful garden bounded by a wall extending almost to where the Pembury Tavern now stands in Dalston-lane, no houses existing at that time on the south side of Dalston-lane up to where the Hackney Brook crossed the road. At the end of the grounds were fish ponds fed by the brook, and open fields spread southward and westward.

Dr. Robinson in his work on Hackney, publishes a fearful record of John Ward's history and crimes, and from that book I venture to make a few excerpta. He was in residence here in 1726. His early life was said to have been in a floor cloth manufactory; then by devious means and schemes he became a member of Parliament. By a mistake, designed—perhaps accidental—in a deed affecting the interest of the Duchess of Buckingham, he was prosecuted by her for forgery, was condemned, put in the pillory, and of course expelled from the House of Commons Then the South Sea Company prosecuted him with Sir John Blunt, and Mr. Greigsby, for the felonious concealment of £50,000. They were successful, and the whole of the furniture and other effects in this mansion were taken in execution for the same, and his other estates and property had in a great measure to be disgorged for the repayment of the defrauded public. While this was going on he was suffering a long imprisonment, and it is said that his great delight was to torture animals, while precluded from doing others harm. In one suit he appears to have been successful, as reported in the *Postboy* newspaper, June 19, 1819, viz., his prosecution of Thomas Dyche, a schoolmaster of Bow, for a libel charging him with misconduct in discharge of his trust in repairing Dagenham

Breach, when the jury gave him £300 damages. Again the Grand Jury found bills of indictment against John Ward of Hackney, and others, for rescuing Ward and wounding several officers who had warrants from the Commissioners of Bankruptcy, June 1, 1731—four bills indictment for wounding Mr. Goostry and officers in the execution of their duty, June 7, 1731. Then he was committed to the Fleet prison, September 16, 1732, and lastly the South Sea Company seized the Market in King-street, Westminster, as being part of his estate, in pursuance of a decree in the Court of Chancery, March 13, 1733.[66]

Among his papers was found the following prayer in his own handwriting, and doubtless his own composition :—" O Lord, Thou knowest that I have nine estates in the city of London, and likewise that I have lately purchased an estate in fee simple in the county of Essex ; I beseech Thee to preserve the two counties of Middlesex and Essex from fire and earthquakes, and as I have a mortgage in Hertfordshire, I beg of Thee likewise to have an eye of compassion on that county, and for the rest of the counties Thou mayest deal with them as Thou art pleased. O Lord, enable the bank to answer all their bills, and make all my debtors good men. Give prosperous voyage and return to the Mermaid sloop, because I have insured it ; and as Thou hast said the days of the wicked are but short, I trust in Thee that Thou will not forget Thy promise, as I have purchased an estate in reversion, which will be mine on the death of that profligate young man Sir J.L. Keep my friends from sinking, and preserve me from thieves and housebreakers, and make all my servants so honest and faithful that they may attend to my interest and never cheat me out of my property night or day." That John Ward was a notoriously bad man and was so considered in his day, may be gathered from the satirical allusion to him in a poetical letter by Pope, giving his name first in a list of " unworthies."

> "That there was no grace of Heaven,
> Given to the fool, the mad, the vain, the evil,
> To WARD, to Waters, Chartres, and the Devil."

In its last days the mansion was divided ; two most excellent families " Boyd " and " Varty " occupying the greater part, and in one of its rooms was a depôt of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Its last days were in very deed its best ![67]

CHAPTER XIV.

(Papers xli., xlii., and xliii.)

HAVING brought my readers to the top of Old Church-street, we stand at the extreme northern boundary of Hackney proper, and, while doing so, it would be interesting to recall the landscape at this point—say in 1700—or a little later, when Rocque's excellent map was drawn and published. Looking to the left, *i.e.*, westward, and following the line of John Ward's garden wall, we come to a foot-bridge over the Hackney Brook. This gave occasion to a minute in the Select Vestry, 27 January, 1723-24, "that the foot-bridge over the river, leading from Clapton to Dalston and Shacklewell, is broken down, and, it not appearing who ought to repair the same, agreed that Henry Ashton, Esq., be desired to speak to Matthew Howard, Esq., relating to the said reparation, it being over the brook that belongs to the Lord of the Manor." Was he the agent of the Lord of the Manor? and was he any relation to the philanthropist? A few houses appear in Rocque's map on the north side of Dalston-lane, and most certainly, from about 1800, there was a continuous line of small villa residences; before that, all that part of the parish would appear to have been farm land, and, without doubt, orchard ground, perpetuated by the name Orchard-place in Clarence-road. This road fifty years ago was known as Back-lane, being a back road to Clapton, coming out where Clarence-road still does, opposite Clapton Pond.

At the corner, looking down Church-street, was an ancient private house standing far back in its own garden; the "Prince of Wales" tavern and the shop behind it occupy its site. The small houses with shops on the right hand side of Back-lane may possibly be one hundred years old. The main road turns to the right for Clapton until it reaches what was known as the Five Houses, when it again bends sharply to the left. This, as noted before, was for a time called Bobs Hall Lane ; it passed between the Church Field on the right, and Clapton Field on the left, on which side was a deep ditch. By a special minute in the Vestry meeting of 22 October, 1726, it was agreed, "that the ditch on the left hand side of the road, leading from Squire Ward's house to the Five Houses, be planked and posted by Mr. John Woodfield, one of the surveyors of the highways, so far as shall be found necessary, it being dangerous to His Majesty's subjects passing that way." For some while Church Field remained an open grazing ground, and Clapton Fields, now Clapton-square, the same. Probably the square was built about the beginning of this century, and for some years, up to thirty years back, the central part remained grass land, enclosed by the iron railings as at present. As indicating the difficulty of obliterating old field pathways, unless they be ploughed up, in extreme dry weather the well-worn path, leading from the south-west corner of the Square to Clapton-passage at its north-eastern corner, would come to light, and be pointed out by aged parishioners of that day as one of the old short cuts to Clapton. The ancient footpath from Church-street to the Lea did not start from the corner of Clapton-square, but from the end of Church-street by the side of Prospect House (now a tailor's shop), and entered the Square about the middle ; a more modern footpath was made across the Square about 1830, when the old fence had become demolished, and at the famous General Election of 1832 the hustings were erected there, and some exciting scenes were witnessed.[68]

Where Portland-place now stands was a kitchen garden and fields leading back to Sutton-place, one or two scattered dwellings, and an old public-house,* still standing opposite Portland-place, sufficed for the more scanty population 100 years ago ; and large old houses, with their extensive grounds, filled up the space forming the eastern side of the Square, and the high road to Clapton. Relative to Clapton-square itself, although most of the houses were erected within this century, there is at the north-eastern corner, close by the entrance of Clapton-passage, a most interesting-looking old house, certainly dating back to 1700, now occupied by Robert Voss, Esq. This was for some time the residence of Dr. Samuel Pett, a highly-accomplished and successful physician.[69]

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* Just re-built ; the Public Baths and Wash-houses to be erected behind it.

By the unsought aid of a *Mercury* correspondent, "G" (who has my best thanks), I am enabled to give more particulars of this Hackney worthy than I gave when referring to his tomb in our Hackney churchyard. By reference to the memoirs of the late Rev. Robert Aspland, pastor or the Unitarian New Gravel Pit Chapel, who died on 30 December, 1845, I find that Dr. Pett was one of his most valued friends, and was, I gather, a member of that once most wealthy and fashionable congregation. He was born at Liskeard, in Cornwall, in 1755, studied medicine in Edinburgh, where he graduated in 1763, practised for a short time in Plymouth, from whence he removed to Hackney in 1804. Here he became most popular, and was a general favourite; hence his painfully sudden and tragic death on New Year's Day, 1824, proved a great shock to Mr. Aspland, and to the Parish generally. At this distance of time I may perhaps, venture to tax my earliest vivid memory by the recital of the cause of death as I heard it, although many a like mishap has occurred since, its cause set forth may act act as a caution to others, both to the general public and the medical profession.

It was thus—Dr. Pett was dining with a family, and the dish at that moment before them was a "jugged hare." The lady hostess remarked casually to the doctor, who was sitting by her side, that she hoped it would be relished, as owing to her cook having injured her hand, she had been obliged to prepare the dish herself, and added "strange to say I have pricked my finger with one of the sharp bones." No more passed then. On the following day Dr. Pett was summoned to his hostess—blood poisoning had set in from the wound, and in a few hours she died. I know not why, but a *post-mortem* was made. At this Dr. Pett wounded himself, and in a short while after, despite every effort, as in the lady's case, to stem the virulence of the inoculated poison, he also was numbered with the dead. No wonder the death was accounted tragic, and that the loss of so valued a life called forth the sympathy of the entire parish. and made his funeral a public one. I have entered into details that I might point a moral—not adorn a tale. Let our housekeepers, our servants, even our young medical men, beware. Although, thanks to the advance of science, especially in my own calling, life has been saved, the poison of the deadliest serpent, although perhaps more rapidly fatal, is not more dire in its results.

One or two small houses are at the corner of Clapton-passage, and beyond them, in the Square, is a well-built villa residence, with carriage sweep, &c., before it; this was erected by the late Mr. Ashpital, a very successful architect and surveyor, whose family have only within the last few years left the house, which, I believe, is now in the occupation of the Salvation Army. His son, Mr. Arthur Ashpital, was a successful architect. Homerton Church, erected from his designs at a time when Gothic architecture was almost at its lowest in this country, is a favourable specimen of his work; the Wellington Memorial Clock Tower, which formerly stood at the foot of London Bridge, and now adorns the park of some City magnate in Sussex, was perhaps his best-known design; his repute in his profession is evinced by the scholarships founded to his memory. Along Clapton-passage we find on the right hand another of our older houses, now occupied by a medical practitioner and at the eastern end, in the Clapton main road, there stood for many years the residence of Joshua Watson; but for its squat appearance—a style peculiar (I presume) to the times in which it was built, probably about 1690-1700—it might have been called a mansion, as it contained many rooms, and covered a good deal of ground; it also had a large well-laid out garden.[70]

Before I pursue my way further, I must turn back for a few moments, and bring my readers once more to Ward's House. I named the Boyd family as having latterly occupied a portion of that extensive mansion. A son or nephew of that Mr. Boyd was principal of Hertford College, Oxford, and latterly vice-chancellor of the University. Then I am favoured with, and have permission to give some of the reminiscences of my valued correspondent, the Rev. R. D. Tyssen, who spent the better part of his boyhood at home at the Manor House—late Mermaid—and revelled in the gardens which had then become private property. Redstarts and other wild birds used to build there, and fieldfares were winter visitants, and subsequently he had the run of Ward's house and grounds, which he says were, when they were children alike their delight and terror. For in these were "hiding places" in the chimney breasts —(well suited for a guilty conscience)—and one small room was paved with bones, and he adds, imagination pictured human bones. The whole place seemed to our youthful minds an ogre-ish castle.

But yet more, there stood in the garden an old square red brick tool house, having a stone ball at the apex of the roof. (This I remember well, but not what follows). When the ground was laid out for building this tool-house had to be pulled down, and the difficulty of getting up its strongly built foundation was very great; while thus engaged they unexpectedly came upon a vaulted chamber, with a subterranean passage leading up to the house. In the vault was found, as a fixture, the capstan of a ship, the presence of which seemed yet more inexplicable in so unlikely a place. "Give a dog a bad name and hang him," and so as they could not make the memory of John Ward much worse, they conjectured, and not without good reason, that our quondam fellow-parishioner was a coiner as well as a forger, and that so heavy a piece of furniture was essential, as a block, on which the dies were struck. My esteemed informant truly moralizes, if this surmise be correct, how striking an instance it is that "the evil men do lives after them." He also states that "the (drawings I presume) tool-house and capstan find a place in my late father's collection, portfolio D, 38 and 40." My present friend very properly regrets that the Tyssen Library is so seldom (comparatively) used, and suggests whether some arrangement could not be made to have a few hours during the day, say once a week, even if a small fee were charged for such a privilege.[71]

I must again start with my readers from the corner of Clapton Passage, making for Upper Homerton. Exactly opposite where the Round Chapel and its schools now stand was an old-fashioned farm-house, small and unpretentious, but a very cosy place, with its door in the middle; behind it were a farmyard and its appurtenances, and by the side of it a lane leading straight down to open fields, now Clapton Park and the Marshes, which, as I have before intimated, was most probably an old Roman foss-way going directly across the old River Lea by a ford (since known as the boys bathing place) and so on to Low

Leyton, Clapton Passage being the only relic as to direction and breadth. Powerscroft-road leading to Blurton-road (which I was just too late to get named Romanford-road) marks the ancient way. On the left hand side, that is the eastern side of the main road, once stood some glorious old elm trees and behind them in due order two old red brick mansions with spacious grounds behind each.

We then came to a house long occupied by a medical man, Mr. Hovell, then the house, for many years the freehold residence of Isaac Hensley, Esq., and standing in its own beautiful grounds, far back from the road, the classically-built residence of John Berger, Esq. These constituted the five houses. Most probably the last three were built from the materials of Bond Hopkins' house, about to be described. The first two in red brick, must have been as old, if not older than that noble building, but doubtless the gardens of each were formerly part of the Hackney House Estate. It is only within the last three years that Mr. Hensley's house was pulled down, its last occupant being our still surviving and benevolent fellow-parishioner, Mr. Compton.[72]

Hackney House, as it was called, was built by Stamp Brooksbank, M.P., in the reign of George I., about 1720, and here he lived until his death. The mansion was very spacious and as good in appearance as the generally depraved architecture of those days admitted. The entrance was by College-avenue, and the building stood in 18 acres of land, entirely surrounded by a brick wall, a portion of which may still be seen in Homerton-row, where it formed part of a beautiful dairy with a cold chamber for milk (originally a grotto communicating with the house itself by a subterranean passage) but thus utilized by the late Samuel Berger, Esq., brother of John Berger. The grounds were beautifully laid out, and the estate itself consisting of nearly 200 acres, comprised land which is now bordered on one side by the Grove, Homerton, and on the opposite side by Pond-lane—now Millfields-road —and reached the banks of the Lea-cut at Pond-lane bridge. A plan of the estate is still extant, dated 1746. At Mr. Brooksbank's death the entire estate was purchased by one John Hopkins, Esq., heir of, and a distant relation of the celebrated Vulture Hopkins, a man who lived in the highest style at Wimbledon, but who acquired the name of Vulture Hopkins because of his intense financial rapacity. Pope thus satirizes him, "When Hopkins dies a thousand lights attend, the wretch who living saved a candle's end." He left £300,000, but by his will ordered that it should not be inherited until after the second generation.

This ridiculous as well as iniquitous instruction was very properly set aside by the Court of Chancery, and the property passed at once to those entitled to it. Mr. Vulture or more properly Mr. Bond Hopkins' detestation of the poor was so great that on one occasion with a fearful oath he exclaimed "God hates the poor! and every man in want is a knave!" The Hackney estate passed to his son-in-law, Benjamin Bond Hopkins, of Clapham, his son sold it to a Mr. Stratton, by whom a portion was sold to a Mr. Hubbard, and from him purchased in 1786 by the Governors of an academical institution called the Calvinist Protestant Dissenters. Wings were built to the house, the stables standing in College-avenue were converted into a dwelling-house for the principal of the college, which was thenceforward termed "New College." Dr. Robinson tells us that the college had but a short-lived existence, the greater part being pulled down somewhere about 1800, and the material used in the erection of some of the five houses, and of a house known as the Priory, with entrance and lodge in Brooksby's-walk, Homerton. The principal's house, known as College House, and standing on the left hand side in College avenue, has only recently disappeared, and the General Omnibus stables occupy part of its site.[73]

Under this building were vaults and a subterranean passage, never thoroughly explored, but giving rise to all manner of weird suggestions, especially when some out of the way pieces of earthenware were also discovered. I think that an explanation for each may be easily rendered. First, we know that an underground passage led from the large house to the grotto at the farthest end of the garden by Homerton-row, and that two of the principals in succession were Dr. Price, the celebrated calculator, and Dr. Priestley, as eminent in scientific and especially chemical research, each residing in this College House, and ministering in the Old Gravel Pit Chapel. What more likely than that Dr. Priestley, who eventually went to America, dying at Philadelphia in 1804, left some of his apparatus behind him, especially the old earthenware crucibles, which I venture to state they were, and were indispensable to his careful chemical investigations.[74]

Hackney House, as it was at first called, was built in the reign of George I. The entire cost for building offices and laying-out the eighteen acres of ground in which it stood was £28,000. It had in front massive iron gates, and a considerable flight of steps leading up to its entrance hall. On either side of the gates were heavy stone piers, each capped with an eagle most elaborately carved, but unfortunately out of a stone which soon crumbled and spoiled their fine effect. In front of the house was an ornamental piece of water, around which the carriage drive was carried, and on the pediment was a fine stone shield, five feet nine inches high, on which were finely sculptured the armorial bearings of Brooksbank and Thompson, his wife; and all have passed away, and, like many another proud castle and comely edifice, " Left not a wrack behind."

Returning up College-avenue, we find ourselves in what is now very appropriately named Urswick-road – a fitting memorial of a by-gone celebrity—and nomenclature far more in consonance with common sense and good taste than the many new names attached to new roads, handing down to posterity the names of men, and purely local celebrities, whose characters, apparently good at the moment, have become eventually a by-word for all that is grasping and scheming, yea, even felonious. The Church of Rome shows her wisdom in postponing canonization until years after the death of the candidate for such honour. Urswick-road was until lately known as Upper Homerton, and along it we pass into Homerton itself. In the maps before me it is not well defined, being, I presume, always considered as a mere hamlet and a section of the Mother Parish, even after South and West Hackney were parted off and became separate rectories.

For convenience sake in my perambulation, I should carry a line along College-avenue due east to the old River Lea, skirt its stream to the Temple Mills Bridge, thence pass due west to the White Post-lane, which is our parish boundary with Old Ford, returning thence by way of Hackney Wick, and along Wick-road (which divides Homerton from South Hackney by a line along its centre) and by Retreat-place to Chatham-place, the eastern side of which forms the western boundary of the hamlet, and along Churchwell-path to Sutton-place and Urswick-road. The origin of the name is lost, if ever an effort were made to unravel it. In Rocque's map of 1745 it is called Humerton, and a goodly row of houses on either side of its main street, *i.e.*, High-street from Sutton-place to the Marsh-hill, shows a population of no mean character. I cannot find the date of the change to the present name, Homerton—in fact,on e would be diposed to assign this, as the proper and original name, Homer-Town, as without doubt the hamlet, circumscribed although it was, had a larger proportion of the great, the noble, the witty, and the wise than the Mother Parish and surrounding hamlets. We may imagine that we are now using its original title.[75]

Dr. Robinson makes so little reference to Homerton that it has positively no place in the index of his history of Hackney, so I ask my readers to bear with me while I feebly attempt to pourtray the hamlet from my own recollection, and as far as possible re-people it with the great ones of the by-gone age, confessing my utter inability to point out, even with the slightest assurance of accuracy, the sites of their several mansions. Few who traverse Homerton to-day will fail to note the squalid poverty of many of its inhabitants, the mean tumble-down dwellings, for which we have to thank the jerry-builders, who doubtless will pass the odium on to the ground landlords, who, believing in the larger and quicker return on capital, invested in the many small rentals, have certainly helped to bring down poor Homerton to what it is. In that interesting relic in our Church Vestry known as the "Long Memorandum Book" we find the following list of some of the dwellers in Homerton (as given by R. Simpson) in 1605 :—The Right Hon. Lord Zouch (he was an amateur gardener, and had a physic garden there), the Hon. Lord Riche (an ancestor of the Earls of Warwick), the Hon. Lord Cromwell, Sir John Laighton, Sir William Hynde, Sir Marmaduke Wyvyll, Sir James Deane, Sir Edward Holmden, Sir Thomas Laighton, and John Shelly, also Roger-Clarke (Alderman), who is mentioned as a resident in 1602, and last, but not least, Thomas Sutton, who came from Stoke Newington, after the death of his wife in 1602, and resided in Homerton until his death in December, 1611.

If we could dissociate Homerton from all its dwellings, bring back the flowery meads and flowing stream—the Hackney Brook—which was, without doubt, its southern boundary in part, and its trees and hedges, the leading characteristic would be that of a promontory, its base at College-avenue, its apex, as it approached Marsh-gate, bending towards

Hackney-wick, in the neighbourhood of the present Victoria Park Station of the North London Railway. The Hackney Brook, after crossing Mare-street, and supplying the water-cress beds between the North London Railway and Morning-lane passed under an ancient bridge at the bottom of Bridge-street, then coursed along Water-lane on its eastern side as an open stream, skirted Berger's factory, around which it bent a little to the east, and then due south, running along the left hand side of what is now Wick-road, but which were then open fields, until it reached Silk Mill-row, a row of houses originally built for the mill hands; at their rear was a wide mill dam, at the tail of which, and across the stream, the Silk Mills (which I well remember) stood. It then crossed what is now Sidney-road, ran along the western boundary of the then Hilly Field, through the gardens of the " White Lion " Tavern at Hackney Wick, thence bending towards the River Lea, in which its course ended.[76]

The view from north to south must have then been charming. Imagine a miniature " hog's back," as it is called in some counties, forming a central line of land, with gentle slopes on either hand of meadows, and shrubby patches. From the acclivity the eye would rest, towards the east, on the winding Lea river, with its marshy surroundings, forming at high tide a miniature sea, and backed by the ancient forests of Rainault and Epping, while towards the south-east and west would be noted the sparsely built up line of road to the Old Ford over the Lea, and the champaign country with its rising Town of Stratford-le-Bow, bounded by the rolling tides of the lordly Thames, with the Kent and Surrey Hills—an unimpeded view—in the far distance, for a background. Even now a glance towards the Surrey Hills, when standing on the Victoria Park railway platform, gives a faint resemblance of what it once was. Small wonder was it that my lords and gentlemen, especially those attached to the Court, then having its seat at the Tower of London, or seeking a more rural residence, as we know they did from time to time, at the Royal Palace at West Ham, should cast an eye on a country so beautiful, and make it the locality for their embowered retreats. I hesitate not to say, take from poor Homerton all its present squalid habitations, its pauperized inhabitants, and its factories and smoky chimneys, and except in Wimbledon and Richmond, very much farther distant as they are from the royal centre, Homerton would vie with, and even surpass, all our other favoured West End localities.[77]

CHAPTER XV.

(PAPERS, XLIII, XLIV., XLV.)

UPPER Homerton—now Urswick-road—had formerly no houses on the west side, *i.e.* on the right hand side going to Homerton. In my early days, of that side was garden ground, and two paddocks which terminated on the northern border of Sutton-place, which also had houses on its southern side. There still exist a few—a very few—of the old houses of Upper Homerton—one, I cannot say which, was for a long while the residence of an old family named Wilkinson, who came there from Tottenham Green. For some years two daughters survived, one the wife of a Norfolk clergyman, the other single, each died within a few weeks of each other, in their old parish, Hackney, since this New Year's day, and were each over 80 years of age, a striking example of another old Hackney family suddenly and entirely disappearing from amongst us. The houses—evidently built in the early part of last century—are plain, but very substantial, and in red brick; there is not the slightest attempt at uniformity in design, and their frontages are equally irregular, remedied, however, by the setting of their railings to form the all essential pathway line, skirting our roads and streets. Our respected surveyor, Mr. Lovegrove, occupies one of the oldest of these houses, and if I remember aright the School Board Truant School stands on the site of one or two other older structures.[78]

Turning to the right down Sutton-place, now lined on that side with houses, we come to the first building, placed on the meadow land which separated Urswick-road from the churchyard. This building was erected and designed for a Proprietary Grammar School in 1830, and was consecrated by the Bishop of London, supported by the then rector, Archdeacon Watson, on 1st October, 1830. The novelty at that time of such a project, caused the school to be very popular (even among Nonconformists) despite the fact that the headmaster was to be a clergyman of the Church of England, and a graduate of Oxford or Cambridge, that the school was to be opened and closed, morning and evening, with reading the Scriptures and prayer, for which the headmaster was responsible; and the system of education adopted was the Madras system, as far as it could be made available. Undoubtedly this school opened with a "flourish of trumpets," which was really justified by its early popularity, as we find that in 1833 (I now quote Robinson) the half-yearly payments amounted to £1293, leaving a balance in hand after all disbursements of £315. But ten years after the numbers had come down to 50 pupils, with a proportionate decrease in income; and the school was at last closed and very cleverly converted into a private dwelling house, its first resident being an extremely worthy old parishioner, Wilmer Harris, Esq., who has long passed away.[79]

Perhaps it would be better, with the school before us, to tell the tale of its woes, especially as upon such foundation mainly rested the erection and consecration of the Hackney Church of England School in Clarence-road, of which more when we come to it. And the tale which I can tell, for unlike the needy knife-grinder, I cannot say "Tale I've none to tell, sir," will sound strange to those who are living in these levelling days and apparently know no other, as evidenced by the very mixed up assemblage of children in our board schools and even schools endowed by the London City Companies, so frequently found in the out-lying districts of the metropolis. I will scrupulously avoid mentioning names, or indicating the same, so that no one's feelings shall be hurt, or even a tender corn put under pressure. I said the scheme was popular, and commended itself to the parishioners generally, especially to those to whom the cost of three shares at £15 each, with a probable call for £5 additional on each, was no object. Consequently some of the leading tradesmen—shopkeepers in the parish—sought the proprietorship.

But, alas! there was a bye-law (perhaps it was a fundamental law) that no *one keeping a shop in Hackney* could be accepted as a proprietor; and some few names of well-known and highly respectable parishioners, already submitted to the committee because of their associaton or relationship with some of the active promoters of the school, were struck off, as much to the indignation of the good old rector, Archdeacon Watson, and some of the leading parishioners, as to the tradesmen themselves; and I have not forgotten a paragraph in a speech made at an indignation meeting on the subject, although it was more than sixty years ago since it was uttered. It was as follows: "So the son of a Hackney shopkeeper, who may be doing thousands a year, and employing so many hands that he need not soil his fingers, and probably pays a rental of £200 a year, is not fit company or a suitable associate for the son of a man who lives in an eight-roomed house, paying £20 yearly rental, and himself serving pennyworths of oil in his own shop, not three miles distant from Hackney."

It was not long before another scheme was afloat, backed up by leading gentlemen, and equally influential tradesmen, *i.e.*, Hackney shopkeepers, while the Bishop of London, the rector, and others came to the front, making only one proviso, the education should be strictly based on "the principles of the Church of England, as by law established," and this points to another "fiasco." (Will my readers forgive me for once assuming the *rôle* of a scandalmonger?) It would appear that once a week—on a Saturday was our Church of England schoolday—the day was devoted to religious instruction solely, and, as the headmaster was a clergyman, the Church catechism was a leading feature. Suddenly, in the midst of a general class instruction, and before the whole school, a boy, to whose turn it came to repeat "The Belief," refused to say it, and, when pressed for his reason and about to be punished for his rebellion, told the master, before them all, that his father "had expressly forbidden him to repeat what he himself did not believe in any of those creeds, and would give his reasons in writing if the committee wished it." Of course, the boy was not punished, but it proved an unpleasant sort of a mutiny, and, as the old churchmen said, the committee of that school, in framing its laws, would have done more wisely had they opened its doors to the shopkeeper and shut them against the Socialist. My readers may wonder when I tell them Dr. Robinson is perfectly silent on the above subjects, and from the scant account he gives of the school in Clarence-road, and the very fulsome history of this short-lived institution in Sutton-place, must have acted very advisedly.

As lack of time and space prohibit my moving further in this paper, I will finish up the history of this school, and its new rival in Clarence-road. For a time the boys looked askanse at each other, and a small internecine war was established, which required some judgment on the part of the respective authorities to calm down, and the number of boys at each school then averaged over 120. At length strife arose with the boys of the Free School, or better known as the Hackney Charity School, in Chatham-place, some small boys of the Sutton-place Grammar School having been maltreated by them. The quarrel was instantly taken up by the Clarence-road School as well, and the two schools, in face of a common enemy, at once became friends (and ever after remained so). Our Field of Waterloo was the Hackney Churchyard, and, as the "charity brats" (the name then given them) poured in from Chatham-place along the Churchwell-path to intercept the Grammar boys as they came out of school in the afternoon, we, from Clarence-road, in equally "imposing columns," rushed down Clapton-square, took the path, now by the Coroner's Court, along the Rectory Garden-wall, and outflanked the Charity boys. There really was some military genius shown on the part of our leaders. The fight become fast and furious, stones and other missles were freely used, as well as heavy book straps. In the midst of the combat the police made their appearance, and by dropping on the ringleaders (for the Charity boys were the aggressors) the riot was with great difficulty quelled, even without a magistrate to read the Riot Act, or calling out the military to empty their shot-belts or give a bayonet charge. So ended the battle of Hackney (now for the first time placed in the rolls of fame), so ended the Grammar School's quarrel, and so concludes this very feeble attempt to describe one of the incidents of the past in our old parish. The north side of Sutton-place was subsequently built as we now see it, and the western side of Urswick-road soon after, thus occupying and shutting out one more of the many green oases of our once country village.

The southern, and first built side of Sutton-place consists for the most part, of good, substantial houses of a moderate size; those especially nearest the churchyard, and probably erected about 80 years ago, are equal in appearance and design, externally, to the best specimens of modern street architecture. An accidental peep into the garden of the first house, which is nearest the churchyard, proves that that is no mean addition to that dwelling, the other houses having much less ground. Passing towards High-street, Homerton, we are confronted with a good old style of mansion, erected, I should guess, about 1700, but evidently, from its peculiar features, within and without, from the materials of a much older building. Its form is a centre and two wings.[80]

For many years it has been divided into two separate tenements, that is, as well as this could be accomplished, for the first floor front central room passes from the west wing over the central portion of the eastern wing. When I first knew the building the larger half, that is, the section nearest Sutton-place, was occupied by the Rev. Dr. Burnett who had here a first-class gentlemen's boarding school, based on the tenets of the Church of England. Some years ago now the Rev. Dr. Burnett, who had married a lady of the Messrs. Berger's family, was presented to the City living of St. James' Garlick Hythe, and moved to Finsbury-square, where he died at a good old age. "Spare the rod and spoil the child" was quite opposed to his tenets, and, when it was once suggested to him that "his moderation (in that direction) might be known unto all boys," he gravely quoted Eton, Rugby, and Harrow as his pet exemplars; but he was a thoroughly good schoolmaster, although "all of the olden time."

The eastern section of the mansion was the residence of the late Charles Horton Pulley, Esq. (perhaps this may be a new name to several of my readers), but until I arrived at man's estate it was in everybody's mouth, for Mr. Pulley was Vestry Clerk, Clerk to the Board of Guardians, and a regular pluralist in all legal clerkly parochial offices, and doubtless did his work, although it was whispered to me the other day that (perhaps taking a correctional hint from his clerical neighbour) he tried to horsewhip a stubborn Vestryman into shape. What moving times they were only sixty years ago, and to think that no irascible wife or aunt, or mother, appeared on the scene either to administer condign vengeance on the flagellator, or hail him before a police magistrate. Mr. Pulley was a member of a large and highly respected family, well-known in Hackney ; perhaps some may still linger here, but the greater number have passed away. The two sections were subsequently occupied by a ladies' school, and Mr. Pulley's portion by the late Mr. Heeps.

A young and energetic society recently established, " The St. John-at-Hackney Institute," have just purchased the premises, and once again it has become one mansion. Under the kind introduction and guidance of its treasurer, Henry Williams, Esq., I managed to get a quick glance at the old building. Of course there are still two entrances —one for either section—but that of the western portion is evidently the original. Here under a portico, of rather a flimsy style (perhaps in succession to a more pretentious portico which may have perished), is a door so substantial in build, and antique in style (being heavily pannelled), that it must have belonged to some older dwelling ; through it we pass into an entrance hall, which appears to have been reduced in width to form more rooms, and whose walls are roughly lined with wood —wainscoat it ought to be, The floor level is below the ground level without ; at the end of the hall or passage is a doorway on the right hand, leading up to the staircase.

The framework of this doorway is a stone arch, ogee pattern, with two pilasters on either side as supporters of the arch, and with an outer framework of wood, probably oak ; but wood and stone alike, and pannelling too, have all been covered with paint, after the late churchwarden fashion, and equally execrable. Through a similar doorway we pass into a kitchen furnished as they were wont to be two hundred years ago. Ascending a somewhat narrow staircase in the western portion of the house, we again come to two stone framed doorways in the same style. The walls of the ground floor room in the same part of the house are covered with a fluted plain pannelling—possibly oak, or it may be cedar—but of couse as carefully covered either with whitewash or some painted medium, to destroy as much of its ancient beauty as possible. The room on the first floor over it is likewise panelled, but quite plain, except for one raised bordering of each segment, about 6 inches by 12 inches.

Passing through the first floor room, in the centre of the house, we find a spacious apartment, by far the largest in the whole building, and extending over the whole of the middle of the mansion, and therefore between the ground floor and third floor of the eastern section of the house. A remarkable feature in the construction of this room, and perhaps indicating its possible use as a ball-room, is that it has a double flooring. This room is also panelled, and the overmantel, which is in excellent preservation, has for its panelling the rose surrounded by fleur-de-lys in each panel. Here, if there were no other signs to be observed, is sufficient evidence of the age of this panelling, and that the present building has been erected with the materials and fittings of a still older, and more sumptuous dwelling, most probably during the century 1400, in the time of the Roses, and the Royal families Lancaster and York, when the French "fleur-de-lys" was more frequently associated with our Royalties than it has been before or since. My strong conviction is that this old house—itself at least two hundred years old—stands pretty nearly on the site of a far more ancient and sumptuous building, that the panelling, although thin, of durable material, and a valuable wall covering in the absence of the still more ancient and costly tapestry, or our modern papering, was carefully removed from the former mansion, and re-adjusted as we now see it; that the entrance door under the porch is also a relic, and opened into a wide baronial hall in the central front of the mansion, and that the stone door frames, now found elsewhere, were the entrances to the several apartments on the ground floor and to the grand staircase leading to the upper floor. And who might be the latest dweller in the original building?

Well, in the absence of more precise information, it is not a far-fetched conjecture that here dwelt Thomas Sutton, and here he died. Before I give a short history of this man who was verily one of nature's noblemen, good and rich and great, peerless without a peerdom, I will attempt to describe the original residence, and its surroundings. With Rocque's map before me I clearly trace a noble mansion standing in its own grounds, at right angles to the present house just described, fronting eastward, and behind a pleasaunce laid out in Italian style apparently, and bordering the church field, just where Churchwell-path now passes. To the south of the garden appears to be a beautiful orchard, extending from the Churchwell-path to Mehetabel road, which I imagine defines the eastern boundary of the original estate, which had for its southernmost limit "Money," *i.e.*, Morning-lane. Between the orchard and this lane ran the Hackney Brook, which within the grounds formed a lake, clearly marked on the map, and from which meadow land gently sloped upwards towards the Money-lane.

It needs no overstrained imagination to picture the beauty of such a spot, and the garden at the first house in Sutton-place would almost seem to be a remainder, on a reduced scale, of Thomas Sutton's garden. But I venture still further, and inquire was this the scene of that celebrated amateur gardener's labours, the Right Honourable Lord Zouch, and his notable assistant one Mr. Lobell, a sort of Sir Joseph Paxton of Queen Elizabeth's day? If so, we are looking upon the grounds where it is said a fruit tree, which had been planted thirty years, was so skilfully shifted to another spot, that not the least damage ensued, and the tree continued its fruit bearing as heretofore.

My readers must admit that our old parish has had its fair share of worthies—of men who have perhaps made their mark, not in the tented field, or at the cannon's mouth, so much as in the highest attainments of science, and in the more God-like walks of philanthropy. Among the latter our whilom parishioner, Thomas Sutton, was not the least conspicuous, and the fruits of his benefactions, like seed sown in good ground, have multiplied many a hundred-fold, and are ripening, and blessing old and young at the present day. A singular coincidence is that he like the Thorolds, and the Clarkes, was a Lincolnshire man, born at Knaith, a small village on the banks of the Trent, three miles from Gainsborough, and fourteen from the City of Lincoln, in the year 1531; his father, Edward Sutton, was the son of Thomas Sutton, who was attached to the court of King Edward IV.

Educated under Dr. Cox, Bishop of Ely, he subsequently entered Jesus and Magdalen Colleges, Cambridge, and from thence became a law student in Lincoln's Inn. His means were sufficiently ample to enable him to visit Spain, and Italy, and the Netherlands. After these travels he became steward to the Earl of Warwick, and subsequently to the Earl of Essex. These appointments, which he most faithfully carried out, brought him under the special notice of that far-seeing woman, Queen Elizabeth, under whom he was made master of the Ordnance, and stationed at Berwick. After fourteen years of this special service he was appointed paymaster of the northern army, then victualler of the navy, and of the garrisons in the low countries. Lastly, the Lord High Admiral of England, the Earl of Nottingham, made him a commissioner of prizes, and gave him letters of mark against the Spaniards, from whom he captured a richly laden ship, worth £20,000.

I gather from Robinson, that some misunderstanding arising between him and the northern nobility, caused him to retire from the royal service, and having increased his fortune and estate, he settled in London. Here, he became a citizen and a freeman of the Girdler's Company, and in 1582 married the widow of one John Dudley, Lord of the Manor of Stoke Newington, where he took up his abode until the death of his wife in 1602. After that bereavement he moved to Hackney, and took up his residence at the mansion I have attempted to describe from the scanty materials at my service, and here he lived, and died in December, 1611. Dr. Robinson goes on to tell us that his body was removed, with all the pomp and solemnity befitting so great a man, to Christ Church (I presume Christ Church, Newgate-street, known as the Blue Coat Boys' church) followed by 6,000 people, and here it was deposited until the Charter House, of which he was the founder, was finished; and under a noble monument, on the north side of the Charter House Chapel, his body, removed from Christ Church, was finally deposited, in December 1614, three years after his death. Mr. Simpson informs us that he signed the deeds, conveying large estates to the Charter House, only six weeks before his death, and that had he survived the completion of the institution he would have been the first governor. [81]

Exactly opposite the eastern end of Sutton-place is a narrow roadway, going due east, towards the Grove, Homerton, now called Homerton-row, but aforetime "Alderman's-walk," whether from some resident therein named Alderman, or because it was a spot possibly frequented by aldermen of the City of London, several of whom were at one time in residence in the parish, and most probably near this very spot; and here taking their morning or evening walks, along what was then a tree-lined avenue, between the meadows, and scattered mansions to the Grove, and the marshes beyond. There were some rather old-fashioned houses on the left hand, standing in a row—Homerton-row—and with small queer windows and doorways, but withal well built, and dating about the reign of George I. These have only disappeared within the last few years, and there is left but one old-fashioned house, with its back to the road, and front in a square garden, as a reminder of Alderman's-walk of the olden time. The road then passes along Cross-street to the Homerton-grove, a long row of small houses on the right hand, leading into Brooksby's-walk; until 50 years ago the whole space from the Berger's (late Stamp Brooksbank's) private grounds, was an extensive market gardener's ground, but now occupied by the City of London Union Branch Workhouse, and the smallpox and fever hospitals of the Metropolitan Asylums Board.[82]

Starting once more from Sutton-place, we pass into High-street, Homerton, and find on either hand a few old-fashioned houses. At the corner, on the left, is still standing the Eagle House—now a dyer's—which I remember to have been, years gone by, the private residence of a good family, the garden backing on to Miss Sedgwick's, whose house is still standing, but altered (I think divided) just beyond Ram's Chapel. On each side the road are small houses and quaint little shops—like those of a country village—doubtless a fair type of those existing some 150 years ago, and evidently built with the *debris* of other, and much larger dwellings. We then come to a good family house standing in its own grounds, which, when I was a boy, reached down to Hackney Brook. Here dwelt at that time a Mr. Hayman, one of whose sons was a school-fellow, and, from what I remember of him, I have often fancied he was the Dr. Hayman—a master at Rugby—of whom we heard a good deal some twenty years sgo.[83]

Opposite this house stands Ram's Chapel—in point of ugliness, within, and without, unsurpassed, but like many a plain face (happily for some of us) there has been "a power of good" and a power for good within. If we single out one specimen only, that of the half-century of ministrations of the late Rev. Prebendary Griffith, we may feel assured than many souls experienced the blessings of the new birth, and of the Gospel of Peace, within its undecorated walls. The chapel, built by Stephen Ram, Esq., it is said in his own garden, in 1723, was erected at a time when church builders had a horror of much ornamentation in the House of God, and architecture generally was at its lowest ebb: in fact, I have often wondered that the churches, such as Spitalfields and some others, erected under the auspices of Queen Anne, are as beautiful as they are, for many edifices soon after this date bear the stamp of that ultra Protestantism, which, unchecked, would have alike demoralized the services, as well as the structures of the earthly dwelling places of the "Most High."[84]

I should imagine that Mr. Ram lived where Miss Sedgwick lately lived and died, if not, that his mansion (in the absence of other evidence) was a fine large house, *temp.* William and Mary, which stood in Plough-lane, and was but recently pulled down for the erection of a large Board School. Its frontage would be at the corner of Homerton-row and Plough-lane, which, at the time of its palmy days, must have been a pretty country nook. In few words, the following was the Chapel's history:—Built in 1723, conveyed by a Mrs. Ram, widow of the founder's brother-in-law, to the Rev. Dr Ballard, Prebendary of Westminster, in 1748. Let by the aforesaid Dr. Ballard in 1766 to the Rev. Thomas Cornthwaite, vicar of Hackney, as a Chapel-of-Ease; sold by the Rev. Dr. Ballard's son 1775 to a board of Trustees or Proprietors, when the Rev. M. B. Williams was the minister—he had been preceded by the Rev. John Eyre, who shortened the Liturgy, and even admitted lay preachers to the pulpit. Subsequently the Church Liturgy and its forms were strictly adhered to, and are so now. The Organ (which I think has just been removed) was co-eval with the chapel, and there is one decoration which must not be overlooked. In two small windows in the chapel is some ancient stained glass, brought from Rouen in Normandy, representing the Apostles, St. James-the-Less and St. Simon.* [85]

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*To the Editor of *The Mercury.*

Many thanks for the kindly and truthful criticisms of a correspondent, Mr. Cole. I might (I confess rather arrogantly) have commenced my "Glimpses" with old Virgil's prefatory sentence to his "Æneid," *Arma virumque cano*, and, in confirmation thereof, had a skirmish—say between our King Alfred and the Danes, or during the Wars of the Roses, occurred at the bottom of Bridge-street, have said more about it than of Ram's Chapel at the top—and then, having written of ancient deeds of arms, my next effort would be to tax an ever busy memory, and talk of men I have known. Hence the Rev. Thomas Griffith was for years known and esteemed by me, and therefore named; but, under Mr. Cole's correction, the Revs. W. Barker and Dr. Hamilton—most worthy ministers—are gratefully recognised, although personally unknown to me, and the large sum, £28,579 18. 7d., raised by the former in nineteen years for church, schools, &c., and other societies, are as creditable to the congregation as to the Rev. W. Baker.

Relative to Ram's Chapel itself, should opportunity offer I hope to view its interior and hear its new organ. If your correspondent refers to my paper, he will find

CHAPTER XVI.

PAPERS, XLVI., XLVII., XLVIII.

I KNOW not whether Stephen Ram, Esq., was born in Hackney, but his name comes suddenly and prominently before us in the minutes of the Select Vestry, where on 4th February, 1722, "it is noted that he paid the sum of fifteen pounds, as a fine, for declining to act as Churchwarden, and Surveyor of the Highways of the Parish," and at the same meeting he was chosen a Vestryman; while, as we find, the following year he builds the chapel. On the 22nd October, 1726, he is refused the sole use of pew No. 13, at the end of the south aisle in the old church, for his family; which despite his stipulation "that it should not be given to any other particular family," was on the 23rd November given to Charles Slaughter, another leading parishioner.

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expressions of regret that the Rev. T. Griffith did not move towards the erection of a more sightly building, when men of wealth were with him (and I could name several) as capable as Joshua Watson who is the leading figure in my present paper. For two reasons I venture to deprecate such ugliness. First, because it is God's House—His Holy Temple—and taking a lesson from the Mosaic accounts, even as to the tabernacle in the wilderness, and (in 1 Kings v—ix.) of the erection of the Temple, I maintain that we, who decorate our shops and dwellings, and make our chief room (the drawing room) a veritable art museum, ought not to forget the place of our solemn assembly—the House entirely devoted to the worship of an everliving God. And secondly the greater attraction of a beautiful building—the light streaming through its stained glass windows, and the sounds of melodious, heart-stirring worship pouring forth from its opened doors; how calculated are they to arrest some forlorn passer-by, who "Weary of earth, and ladened with his sin," is thereby induced to enter, and in the joyous service, under the Divine blessing, finds the rest and refreshment he was longing for.

Pardon, Mr. Editor, this homily from

Yours faithfully,

22nd April, 1893. F.R.C.S.

He is again named among the members of the Select Vestry, in 1729, as belonging to the district of Homerton, which then had eleven representatives—by far the largest contingent in the parish; and on 23rd March, 1729, he was elected trustee of the Rev. Dr. Spurtowe's charity. And then we find an entry, dated 25th March, 1771, that the Rev. Mr. Cornthwaite (vicar) had made inquiry about a lease, or the purchase of the chapel; but the owner, Mr. Ballard, being a minor, only a short lease could be affected, nor could it be sold until after he came of age, about two years forward; and at the next parish meeting, Easter Tuesday, 1771, the state of the chapel was taken into consideration, and so settled that the vicar might be enabled to let the seats at half-a-guinea each. Mrs. Stephen Ram died in 1710, and, although first buried in the parish church, her body was removed to the chapel; and here also Stephen Ram's body rests with her, he having died in 1770. In the vaults beneath the chapel are also deposited the bodies of the Rev. John Eyre, 17 years minister of the chapel, who died 28th March, 1803, and his widow, who outlived him 24 years; and of the Rev. William Bell Williams, 27 years the minister, who died 26th March, 1830; his wife also buried with him, she having predeceased him two years. Early engravings of the chapel show a raised pathway, much higher than the present level, and protected by wooden posts and rails—this may have caused the chief entrance door of the building to be far less askew than it is now; but view the structure as you may, one can only regret that when during the height of its prosperity and the support of wealthy (and we must believe generous) trustees and seatholders, the most estimable and Rev. Prebendary Griffith gave no encouragement to the demolition of the chapel, in order that a more consistent-looking place of worship might be erected on its site. But "it is never too late to mend."

The next notable building was the residence of the late Miss Sedgwick, daughter of the Harry Sedgwick who suggested and superintended the planting of the trees in the churchyard. I infer that this was her father's house; here Miss Sedgwick (Marian, the eldest daughter) died on 16th January, 1860, aged 80; a sister of her father's died on 3rd February, 1842, aged 92. One half the house is fronted and occupied by a pawnbroker. Then we come to Plough-lane, and to the one most notable corner, occupied still, as doubtless it has been for some five hundred years, by the last remains of an ancient building, this portion being the Plough Public House. Let my readers visit the spot—if teetotalers, they need not go inside—note the style of the building, with its gable fronts north and west, then let them in imagination (for that is all that is left us, except tenacious memory of the past, if any of them go back some sixty years), let them stand on the old bridge by Church's Brewery, at the bottom of Bridge (or Brydge) street, and look up the then very steep ascent to High-street. On the top of that hill they would have seen one long frontage of gables, forming a mansion which stretched from Plough-lane to John-street, Homerton, at one time no doubt the cynosure of the hamlet. Behind it was an extensive enclosure—a yard, part still remains as a wheelwright's—and other portions are cut up and appropriated to various uses, in small allotments, as the land increased in value, and the exigencies of a busy population required it. The quadrangular space was enclosed by a portion of the building passing down Plough-lane and its counterpart down John-street.[86]

So changed is all that, that I must get the greater part of my readers to take my word for it. The demolition of the marvellous old structure commenced at its John-street end; then rested for a time, and again broke out until, after the fashion of a silkworm on a mulberry leaf, bit by bit was modernized (shall I say demoralized ?), until all but the Plough Public House has vanished. The builders were not Goths enough to replace the old gable frontages with Gothic architecture—that would have been more sightly; and then in front of the building, especially facing the wide opening of Brydge-street, were some glorious old elm trees; well of course, they went also, but they were slow to go. *O tempora! O mores!* (N.B. Would some enterprising photographer turn his camera on the Plough Public House, take a careful view of its front in High-street, then perhaps some smart limner would carry that gable front, ruled by the width of the present separate tenements, to John-street, and this most interesting old building would be reconstructed.) * Roque's map marks distinctly the ground plan and extent of the original mansion, which seems to have an addition to the eastern wing, or a kind of return on the John-street side. The question now comes, how shall we re-habilitate it ?

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* A photograph of a larger portion of the building is in existence.

Who first dwelt here? What was it intended for originally? Old names cling to houses and neighbourhoods, and generally are founded on some fact—it may be dictated by time or circumstances. Hence the "King John's Palaces" which crop up here and there in the metropolis and elsewhere were not likely to have been occupied personally by that unbrotherly monarch; but such buildings may have had some connection with royalty, and a sovereign, whose conduct has given him a very questionable celebrity, may by that very notoriety, have had this legendary free use of his name.

The popular notion is that our Homerton mansion was a palace of a Bishop of London; with that idea before us, and taking a critical note of its surroundings, a chronicler may fairly venture on its possible earliest history without being accused of extravagant and unreasonable theory. Calling back my reader's attention to Hackney in its earliest times, we find the absolute historical fact that Richard de Gravesend, Bishop of London, had free warren granted him by Edward I., 1290, of the Manor of Hackney; and that he appointed John Duckett, a yeoman (no doubt a very substantial yeoman), who held the lands, and, of course, cultivated and stocked them. Doubtless, as in the case of Abraham and Lot in patriarchal times, the land was free, and open before them, to choose what site the Bishop or John Duckett might consider most eligible for a dwelling; and it is not a stretch of fancy to imagine that of all that Homerton could then show, no spot would be more picturesque, as well as convenient, than the top of Brydge-street-hill (clear the houses all away in your mind's eye), with its sloping meadow land, bounded by the brook, and its easy contiguity to the King's highway.[87]

Roque's map shows at the back an enclosed yard—then apparently a square— or rather oblong plot of garden ground and orchard; and a lawn behind, bordered by Alderman's Walk. My impression is that this building was part palace, part farmhouse; that the farm side was bordered by Plough-lane, hence the name of that thoroughfare; and that it was occupied by buildings for husbandry and labourers' dwellings; while the palatial quarter, which by the map seems to have had a more pretentious wing, was bordered by, and had its exit in John-street—so amed by the early associations of the Knights of St John-of-Jerusalem. And then presuming a main road was soon formed, viz. Brydge-street, to pass, by the way of Water-lane and Well-street, to the Capital, or by Money-lane to the village. We have opposite the John-street end Shepherd's-lane, the leading way to the meadows, where pastured the sheep along the brook's banks. I may not have looked upon, years ago, the original structure, but some parts of it were much like the aristocratic country dwellings (not being castles) about 1450 to 1500, *temp.* Richard III. to Henry VII; while a portion of it was much like that deeply interesting Staples Inn, Holborn, which we know was built about the reigns of Elizabeth and James I., 1600.

My readers may possibly regard my efforts to bring out the history and rehabilitate the old house (the Bishop's Palace) at the top of Bridge-street, Homerton, as somewhat mythical; hence, before I pass on, I would give further reasons for my theory. As the character of a man is often known by the company he keeps, so sundry old buildings, which themselves have been well nigh improved off the face of the earth, may be known by their surroundings, and, to my mind, a clearer piece of evidence cannot be found than that within a stone's throw of the house, we find a public house known by the sign of the "Lamb and Flag," and it must be evident to anyone that this otherwise incongruous combination, "a lamb and a flag," can point to no other but that world-wide and equally renowned insignia of the Knights' Templars, especially of St. John-of-Jerusalem. This house, although comparatively modern in its present construction, is evidently the successor of an older building, either on the present site or still nearer John-street, as College-street, at the corner of which it stands, takes its name from Homerton College—a modern erection—and the hostel, formerly close to the palace, may have been shifted some few yards.[88]

Just as we find in Lower Edmonton and Cheshunt, public houses bearing the sign of the "Cross Keys," &c., thus giving evidence of the residential palace of the great Cardinal Wolsey at Cheshunt, so we may fairly infer that such a building as Homerton once possessed, may have given the heraldic insignia of its lordly owner to a building, doubtless erected for the benefit and good housing of the many retainers whose masters would visit the place. And opposite we find another old public house "The Coach and Horses," at which the many steeds of the mounted followers might find stabling and provender. I remember the yard of that old inn in its palmy days when two stage-coaches, owned by a Mr. Hawkins, used to run from Homerton to the Royal Exchange. Four coaches went daily, two from this yard and two others further on, making three or four journeys each every day. The inn yard was the very type of an old country village inn yard, and before the Messrs. Berger secured so much of the land thereabouts for their extensive premises, it opened right on to the adjoining meadows. The "Lamb and Flag" had pleasure gardens with their usual accompaniments. Exactly opposite, where a new street, Rosina-street, now runs, stood a large very plainly built house, *temp.* George I. or II., with a garden at the back; it was known as the Manor House. Sixty years ago it was occupied by the Rev. D. Dickins, third master of the Hackney Church of England School, who had here a large number of boarders—pupils at the school. Retracing my steps, I would direct attention to the low-built houses from Shepherd's-lane to Bridge-street. These are evidently of some age, modernized by new fronts for shops. Passing down Bridge-street is a remarkable-looking old house on the right hand side; of its history I know nothing, but it seems to be kept in such good repair, at any rate externally, that it appears to have a new face.[89]

Beyond that, and almost close to the railway bridge, which here crosses at a great height, are three houses at least two hundred years old; the last of the three, which has been for some years occupied by a most respectable undertaker—a Mr. Bull—merits notice. On the face of the building, between the first and second floors, a stone tablet has been let into the wall—I should think at the time the house was built. At the top are sculptured (a deep stone cutting) a pair of scales evenly balanced, on either side a capital B. Underneath "This is Brydge Street, Hommerton, Howard's Row." Among the gentry of Homerton, between 1600 and 1700, are a few in the lists of the Select Vestry, whose surnames begin with B but not their Christian names. On the 16th July, 1712, we find a Mr. Matthew Howard, associated with a Mr. Webb, making a report relative to a Mr. Lupton's school, and he seems to have been an active and influential member of the Vestry—a representative of Homerton for at least twenty years. This Mr. Howard may have given the name to the row which once stood here, and probably formed the northern side of the street. However, I will tell what was told me. The owner of the initials is not known. The scales were typical of justice, and it is said a Justice of the Peace first occupied (perhaps built) the house.[90]

That in this house dwelt for a time Mr. Howard, the philanthropist, and that he took the two houses adjoining, evidently built in somewhat the same style, and of the same materials, as places of refuge, or rest for the prisoners who by his influence had been set free—the two houses in question being kept quite apart from his residence. The style of the house is peculiar, and it has a kind of square tower with a separate roof, up which the staircase is built. The structure of the three houses is dark red brick bedded in cement, so hard that Mr. Bull tells me it will turn a nail's point. In olden times the view along the Brook valley must have been very pleasing. On the other side of the street, going back to High-street, are several small tenements, which may have replaced older structures. In Rocque's map (1745) the above Howard's-row is marked, but no building opposite, nor any until we reach the crest of the hill, the blacksmith's and other shops to the "Coach and Horses."[91]

Two doors from the "Lamb and Flag" stands Homerton College, known for years as the Protestant Dissenters' Academy, for training young men for the ministry among the Congregationalists. For want of time and space I must somewhat condense its history, although without doubt it has done good and effective work among our Nonconformist friends and neighbours, and of the many who have been thus trained, it may be said of some "this man was born here," *i.e.*, to higher spiritual life, and efficient service in the Church and world. The funds which started it, and for some while sustained it, were from two sources, the Congregational Fund Board, and the King's Head Society, both established for the benefit of Protestant Dissenters. The latter established in 1730, was so called because their first meetings (those of gentlemen of piety and influence) were held at the King's Head, in Sweeting's Alley; from this, in 1742, they removed to the Poultry, still preserving the original title. Plaisterer's Hall was first taken for an Academy, so that tutor and pupils should be in residence together. In 1754, a large house opposite Bancroft's Almshouses in the Mile End-road was taken, and the College moved there. Subsequently, on the expiry of that lease in 1769, an old mansion in Homerton, belonging to a Mrs. Hawtyn, was secured, and the residue of the lease purchased. Here the academy continued prosperously, but the constant repairs of the building and its lack of adaptation to their increasing necessities, led to a careful survey, and the demolition of the entire structure, which stood where the grass plot and carriage drive now are, and the erection of the present College in 1823. Eighteen, and eventually twenty collegians were in residence at a time.

It owed much of its popularity to the late Rev. Dr. Pye Smith, one of the most talented, as well as pious and devoted men of his time. He lived in one of the houses opposite the college, and was the minister of the Old Gravel Pit Chapel, now the Rev. J. De Kewer Williams. I had some knowledge of him, and on one question, geology, especially with reference to the Creation—and the several days as set forth in the first chapter of Genesis—the Rev. Dr. created quite a panic in the religious world ; and I shall not soon forget the excited disputations, especially more private discussions, at which I was a privileged listener, at the house of the late George Loddiges, Esq. (his firm friend and admirer) and elsewhere. In fact Dr. Pye Smith lived before his time, and with the present advance in scriptural geology—with the present acceptance, as connected with the revealed truth of the everlasting Gospel, not impugning the fact that He who is from all eternity to all eternity, constructed this wondrous globe of ours in His own time, and by His immutable laws, irrespective of man—His last and noblest effort—and has given to man such development of mind, and increase of knowledge, as shall enable him, as in a book, to read from the rocks earth's marvellous history, and wonder and adore Him, who is alike the great Creator and the loving Father. Homerton College has, however, had its day, another migration is contemplated. It has been of late styled the Homerton Undenominational College, at which now there are 79 students in residence, and a large number of boys and girls under their special tuition, forming thus an invaluable field for pupil teachers. 92

With reference to the Rev. Dr. Pye Smith, named in my last paper, I may add an amusing fact, proving how unwittingly one may be brought in contact with individuals holding diametrically opposite views, in no way connected with each other, and, as to residence, equally far apart.

If memory serves me, Dr. Pye Smith's lectures on Scripture and geology were delivered at the London Institution, Finsbury-circus, to crowded audiences. Among his regular hearers was a clergyman of the evangelical school, I believe but recently returned from a post he held under the Church Missionary Society—an excellent man; and on the list of patients of the medical man to whom I was articled. Time after time I heard his views *vivâ voce*, but in proof how keenly he felt on the subject, a column and a half in small print, and as an advertisement, appeared in *The Times* newspaper after each lecture, by way of a "counter blast." To how little purpose the present day's experience of the Christian literary world will prove. The Rev. Dr. Pye Smith was a leading upholder of the Bible, and its promulgation, and an active member of the British and Foreign Bible Society.

Surveying the right hand or southern side of High-street, and starting from what was called the Manor House, there were one or two good houses, bringing us to Berger-road (a comparatively modern street), interspersed with neat villa-like dwellings, occupied by good residential parishioners, until we came to what is now called Macintosh-lane. This was an ancient footpath, almost in a line with Brooksby's-walk, also originally a footpath; only the latter leading from the Mills (now the East London Waterworks) at Lea Bridge, through Homerton into Water-lane, and thence either by that into Mare-street, through Well-street, or by Shore-place (now Shore-road) through the Fields to Bethnal Green, or by another branch, where Water-lane ends and Well-street begins, through footpaths into Grove-road, and hence to Mile End and Bow. I have traversed some of these paths, betwixt beautiful quick-set hedges, trimmed as they are wont to be in good farming localities, and often brilliant with their snow-white flowers. Beyond Macintosh-lane were two good houses, semi-detached, with large gardens, stabling, &c., behind. The memory of the peaches grown on the walls of one of those houses lingers with me still.[93]

Where Church-road now runs was a handsome red brick mansion, having a carriage sweep, with wrought iron railings, and double gates in front, and behind an extensive garden, with a substantially brick-built bath-house, fed by natural springs, on its eastern border (this bath-house was standing for some time, even after Church-road was made).

The garden led down to a wide, sloping lawn, and thence to extensive meadows, watered and bounded by the Hackney Brook. The field between the southern end of Macintosh-lane and the Water-lane corner of Berger's factory, was, when I first knew it, a pretty hilly plot—a grazing field for sheep—and the brook was crossed at the factory corner by a single plank bridge and rail—a formidable-looking venture for a small child—and once thought of with horror by day, and in dreams by night (by the writer), when the brook, swelled by rains, rushed with a torrent's force underneath. Along the brook's margin on the Homerton side were subsequently extensive rope works, before the relentless jerry builder put his foot down and spoilt those fields.

Beyond Church-road was another handsome old house, of dark red brick, that also has disappeared. I have been reckoning up in memory the score of carriage people, and I knew for a fact there were on that side of Homerton, from Shepherd's-lane to opposite Brooksby's-walk, five families who kept their carriage-and-pair, and two, carriages with one horse only. Several were originally from Spitalfields, and identified with the silk trade. A cursory inspection of the low-built houses on the north side of High-street, from College-lane to the church, gives them an age of more than a century, and reveals the fact that they have been constructed from the debris of other and larger mansions. Rocque's map, if accurate in its details, sets out at least three large mansions with leafy avenues, parterres, groves, and gardens leading back to the meadows of the Stamp Brooksbank estate; upon the site now occupied by Homerton Vicarage, and the school, stood in my time a good house which appeared to have been the relic of a much larger building. Attached to it were coach-house and stabling, and two pretty square paddocks, forming the south-western boundary of Brooksby's-walk, on which Homerton Church was subsequently built. The house, &c., and land were in the occupation of a Mr. Bristow, a highly respectable coach proprietor, and the owner of two stage coaches (painted green), which ran between Homerton and the Royal Exchange by way of Bridge-street, Water-lane, and Well-street, several times a day, Homerton, as I have before stated, then giving ample traffic for the four coaches, Bristow's and Hawkin's. Brooksby's-walk was wide enough for carriages, as far as the present northern boundary of the small-pox and fever hospitals.[94]

From that point, passing through a turn-stile, we entered a narrow footpath, bounded on the right by the high garden wall of the Priory House grounds (a portion of the Stamp Brooksbank Estate) and on the other by a quick-set hedge; after two sharp bends, by which we compassed this garden wall, we came out through another turn-stile into the open fields, at the back of the London Orphan Asylum, but some distance from it. Our field path was then open on the left, and the hedge still on the right, down the swelling hillside (now Chatsworth-road) until we entered the lower end of Pond-lane—now the eastern boundary of the cricket fields—an umbrageous country lane carried on the Pond-lane straight down to the Lea river at Pond-lane Bridge, but the traveller wending his way to Lea Bridge, turned a little to the right and followed the footpath (the original one here still existing) across the marsh land, now happily the people's for ever, to the mill head, and East London Waterworks at Lea Bridge, and so journeyed into Essex.[95]

While on the river's brink, I would pursue my course due south, not along the course of the river Lea, but by the towing path of the canal, formed by Lord Burleigh in the 18th year of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, 1578, and known as the "New Cut," or the "Hackney Cut." We are still well within the parish of Hackney, and the county of Middlesex, the river Lea proper being from thence to its mouth the county boundary. Just on the other side of the towing path is another watercourse, also called the canal. This was constructed in 1833-4, and extends from the old river, just below the waterworks mill, to near and above Old Ford Lock in the parish of Stratford. The bottom of this canal is about seven feet wide, sloping upwards to some eighteen or twenty feet. Apart from carrying the water from the old river direct to the original Old Ford reservoirs, it helps the more efficient drainage of the marsh. Beyond this canal we have extensive breadths of marsh land, varying in width by the winding course of the original river, and this throws out another branch north of the White House fishery, forming the mill stream for the Temple Mills and within its course including yet more of Hackney parish marsh lands.[96]

Before leaving the river I should remind my readers that in ancient days—say prior to 1500—the Lea was often, at high tide on the Thames, one mile wide as far as Ware in Hertfordshire, but by embankments, locks and drainage, it has been gradually reduced to its present limits. Coming back towards Homerton, as we come in line with High-street, an abrupt ascent, known as Marsh Gate and Marsh Hill, brings us once more on the higher level. Just before we ascend, there would be noted a somewhat old-fashioned square built house, standing in its own grounds, and surrounded by a moat—it was called the "Moat-house"—and was occupied for many years by a highly-respectable London solicitor and his family. I have no record of their bill of health, but it were well to know whether, and how they were insured against ague; and it speaks well for the health of Old Homerton, that from no such cause did they eventually leave a dwelling in which they had resided many years. This house and its surroundings have passed away. Then there was another house, known as Symington House, also standing in its own grounds, at that time one of the survivals and reminders of Homerton's past glories. The extensive lands, garden grounds, and meadows, skirting this portion of the marsh, and coming up to the back of the houses on the eastern side of Brooksby's-walk, were partly the freehold of Mr. Glynn, the London banker, hence the Glyn-road of the present day, and under the cultivation of a sturdy Homertonian—a Mr. Brandon—who I believe at the ripe age of 87, still lives to give ocular demonstration of the health-giving and life-prolonging properties of our Hackney parish, even in its hamlet Homerton.[97]

CHAPTER XVII.

(PAPERS, XLIX., L., LI.)

RETURNING to High-street, Homerton, I would direct the special attention of my readers to its church and vicarage, the elevations of both forming so harmonious a whole, that the general impression on the mind of a stranger is that he is looking on the work of some talented mediæval architect; yet up to 1845 the site of these buildings was Bristow's house, stables and fields—at any rate so occupied but a few years before. Feeling fully justified in getting more particulars and entering into more details of such excellent work for my readers' sake, and to prove that Homerton is not altogether despised in its present poverty, I sought an interview with the Rev. F. R. Blatch, and renewed my acquaintance with a vicarage I often visited during its occupancy by the Rev. Mr. Godding. Both church and vicarage are from the designs of Mr. Arthur Ashpital, a former acquaintance, and whose father resided for many years in Clapton-square. The vicarage, apart from its quaint, mediæval elevations, and its porch at the entrance door, with seats on either hand, has very ornamental bay windows, and elaborately designed ceiling in the rooms on the ground floor. In the vicar's study the walls are lined by twelve panels—architectural and classical—in oils, with burnt umber. These were brought from the Tyssen manor house—I presume formerly the Mermaid.[98]

It was in 1844 that Joshua Watson, Esq., whose pious benevolence I have already recorded, feeling a special interest in Homerton, where his parents John and Dorothy Watson had lived for many years, and where his mother died on 11th Dec., 1812, at a house now numbered 122, High-street, Homerton, determined to furnish the greater part of the cost of the erection of both church and vicarage, as well as to provide for the endowment. He was the more incited to this special act of generosity by the fact that it was fulfilling the earnest wish of his good departed brother, the then late rector, Archdeacon Watson, and the church was completed and consecrated in 1847.

The first incumbent was the Rev. C. J. Daniel, a near relation of the Lord of the Manor. In a very short while the congregation so increased that an enlargement was absolutely necessary; and a north aisle, which had already been set out in the original plan, was erected and completed, and the further consecration took place on 1st August, 1852. The good old man, Joshua Watson, then in his 83rd year, rejoiced in the enlargement, but was too feeble to be present at the services. Schools were subsequently erected in Berger-road, Homerton New Town (the pretty field I have already named), but for lack of means to carry them on as day schools, they were sold to the London School Board, the products of the sale helping much the erection of the present Sunday Schools, Hall, Mission House, and class rooms, adjoining the vicarage. The first part, hall and schoolrooms, were completed in April, 1881, the latter in February 1885, at a total cost of nearly £5,000.[99]

To the Rev. C. J. Daniel succeeded my much loved friend, the Rev. Mr. Godding, during whose incumbency the Rev. Dr. Ryle (now Bishop of Liverpool) was no infrequent preacher. The Rev. W. Baird followed Mr. Godding, and during his incumbency the chancel was raised, as it is now seen, and choir stalls were added, while the organ, which formerly stood on the west by the tower, was removed to the eastern end of the north transept. Since then the organ has been replaced by one from the City church of St. Mary, Outwyche, and heating apparatus has been put up. By degrees the walls, which were dull, and in a rather dark church were gloomy, have been freely and effectively decorated. The designs are by Mr. Elliot, of Amhurst-road, and the work carried out by Cross and Buckley.

There are panels on each side of the east window of worshipping Angels, above the *Agnus Dei*, while the chancel walls are stencilled in rich patterns. The window itself is very good. The chancel arch has the figure of a dove descending, and on either side St. Paul and St. Barnabas. Between the windows in the nave are large oil paintings, given *in memoriam*. They are boldly and exquisitely designed and executed, and are as fully realistic as such drawings can be; each conveying valuable and important Scripture truths, viz., on the south side, (1), Christ blessing children; (2), At the wedding feast; (3), Feeding the 5,000; (4), Raising the widow's son; north side, (5), Parable of the sower; (6), Of the wicked husbandmen; (7), Of the Prodigal's return, and (8), Of the Good Shepherd.

The present excellent incumbent is the Rev. F. R. Blatch, who has already spent seventeen years of devotion and labour in poor Homerton, and has certainly rendered his church bright and beautiful. The churchwardens in the Rev. Mr. Godding's time were Messrs. James Edmiston and Frank Parker. The former was a zealous, active churchwarden, by profession an architect and surveyor, but his most pleasing memento was an evening hymn, his own composition, which for its simple purity and pathos is worthy to take its place by Keble's and S. J. Stone's exquisite hymns. "Holiest! breathe an evening blessing," was for several years the closing hymn at the Sunday evening service. It was set to the music of an Italian chorale, and to any who may desire to know more of it, it is thus found in Novello's *Musical Times*, No. 74.

Another worthy official was the churchkeeper, Mrs. Sayers, much esteemed for her gentle, pleasing manners. Strange to say, she was the mother of Tom Sayers, of sporting and prize-fighting celebrity. Of the chief benefactor of Homerton Church, Joshua Watson, it may be said truly, that while the ancient dwellers in the plains of Babel impiously strove to rear a tower which should enable them to enter Heaven, and were frustrated, this holy man, with only his bank pass book in hand, has raised a building, which, by its services, and its influences, draws many a soul from earth to Heaven itself; being a centre of light and life under the valued ministrations of the Rev. F. R. Blatch and his curate. The house occupied by the parents of Joshua Watson, and where his mother died, is nearly opposite the vicarage, and at the corner of Mackintosh-lane. It still stands, but has been divided and fronted with shops.[100]

Passing again towards the Marshes, we miss, on the right hand side, some of the older and larger houses—mansions some undoubtedly were. Short streets running down as far as the North London Railway (which now cuts off all through thoroughfare), occupy the sites of these houses and their gardens. So great, indeed has the change been in building shops and the like, that a visitor who had not for sixty years surveyed this portion of the hamlet, could not possibly recognise it, while we, who have known it all along, cannot admit it is a change for the better. There are a few villas and some terrace-like houses, which may have been standing from sixty to eighty years, and are but little altered. And so we pursue our wondering way, with the new big (and likely to be bigger) Hackney Workhouse close upon us. Just this side stands a house which seems interesting as to age, and may be 150 years old. It is most decidedly marked in Roque's Map 1745,—and its present shape—a body standing back, and one at right angles, coming to the pathway on its east side. Then, prior to the year 1841 (in which it was demolished to rear a larger and more commodious establishment), we should have come to the old workhouse, of which there are some interesting water coloured sketches in the Tyssen Library,.[101]

Next to the old building was Homerton Castle, by no means a relic of feudal times, but an ordinary good-sized dwelling-house, made up of all manner of styles, its incongruity intensified by a castellated structure on its western side, of course a dwelling, or rather, extension of the dwelling-house. From what can be gathered from a picture of the place (for its back was to the street, shut in by a high brick wall), it had a pretty garden front looking upon grounds beautifully laid out, with a fish pond and fountain, and greenhouses and vinery. It was last occupied by a London wine merchant named Driver, who, I believe, died there. After that event it was purchased by the Poor Law Guardians, and the new infirmary now occupies its site. Next to it was a row of well-built houses, probably dating from 1720. These still remain, forming the line of roadway to Sydney-road.[102]

I omitted to notice that in Rocque's map, to which I have frequently to refer, as the oldest well defined plan of our parish, Homerton is styled "Humerton," a rather less classical designation than its present name, and certainly one more difficult to unravel. In a former paper I referred to the Moat House at Marsh Gate. I have since heard that when it was pulled down, a zealous antiquarian (Mr. Brown, formerly of Mare-street) secured one of the timber beams—I presume oak--from it; he had a small strong box made, and presented it to Mr. Harding, verger, for the church records, and in it the long memorandum book, commencing 25th March, 1581, and other of the most ancient church MSS., are now deposited. Most probably the building itself was coeval with the first date. From the Marsh Gate to Brooksby's-walk on the north side, with the exception of perhaps some half-dozen good dwellings, there must have been only cottages, as we see them in the country villages of the present day.[103]

With one notable exception a public-house, or what would be more appropriately termed an inn, the "Adam and Eve," which still exists, but its earlier antique appearance, as I remember it, spoilt with a new front. What's in a name? is a question often put in the case of persons, places, and things in general. I am disposed to think much, especially, as I have already demonstrated, in ancient hostelries, the "Lamb and Flag" to wit. The sign the "Adam and Eve" is a very uncommon one, in fact I should think, except from some old associations, rarely given by the great brewers, or enterprising builders, and if my readers will not think me tedious, and too verbose, I would feign trace it out in this and other instances, two others which I will cite. An Adam and Eve public-house once stood at this end of Brick-lane; it has been swept away for improvements. This was in the vicinity of the Religious House of St. Mary's Spital, now forming the parish of Spitalfields.[104]

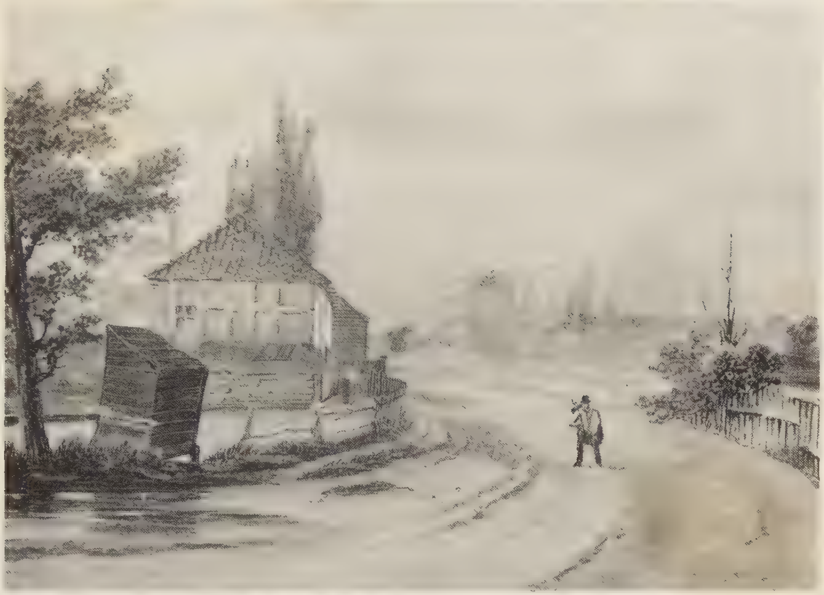
The second is an ancient inn standing at the top of the "New-road" (its proper name) in the City of Lincoln, and just opposite to the ancient east gate of the Cathedral Close. While all around that deeply interesting minster are either Pagan Roman buildings, or extensive memorials of the same, here on the eastern side, and an approach to the most sacred part of the cathedral known as the "Choir of Angels," was ages ago located the inn with this significant sign, a memorial of our first parents, of the origin of man, of Paradise itself. If, I venture to suggest, other ancient inns of the very few with such a significant sign as "Adam and Eve" exist, I would ask my readers to trace their religious associations. But it may be said why quote Lincoln? Well, strange to say it crops up from time to time in the early history of our parish Thus we have found amongst our early parishioners the Thorold's and the Clarke's, clearly Lincoln families, and the King's briefs read in our church on at least two occasions for fires at Metheringham—a still existing and fashionable village near Lincoln—and searching the bygone records of the city I have discovered that our own Thomas Sutton, founder of the Charterhouse, left by will the great tithes of Glenton for the benefit of twelve poor citizens of Lincoln.

But a yet stronger piece of evidence follows: my readers will call to mind that Edward I. granted to Richard de Gravesend, Bishop of London, the Manor of Hackney in 1290. We find in the records of Lincoln Cathedral that "Benedict (or Richard) de Gravesend" was Dean of Lincoln in 1254, and in that year founded the Deanery, which still exists, in the Cathedral Close; that he was consecrated Bishop of Lincoln on 3rd November, 1258, and died 18th December, 1279, being buried in the south aisle of that Cathedral, the inscription on his tomb in Saxon characters being still visible. Is it not a reasonable certainty that our Richard de Gravesend, Bishop of London, was a son of the above; may have been born and dwelt in Lincoln itself, and at the Bishop of Lincoln's palace at Buckden, Huntingdonshire, not sixty miles from Hackney, and have naturally brought his old associations with him? To my own mind this solves the problem of the original connection in mediæval times, of our parish with that ancient city. It should also be borne in mind that Bishops in feudal times had an almost regal retinue, and that among their immediate followers were many of the great, the rich, and the noble in the land; and yet further that the See of Lincoln was far larger, and approached much nearer the metropolis than that of the present day.

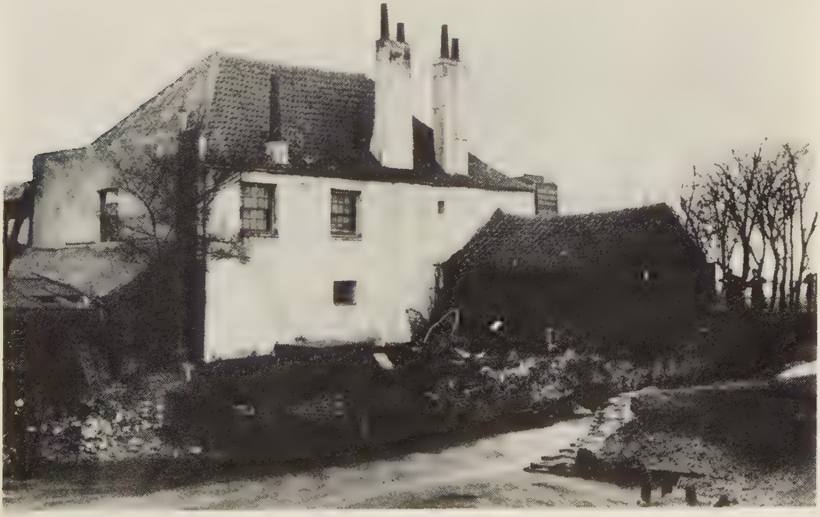
Referring once more to our Homerton "Adam and Eve" Inn, I may suggest to my readers that without doubt, Homerton, by way of its Marsh Gate and road by Temple Mills, leading direct from Stratford-le-Bow, West Ham, Low Leyton, and the important towns (once Roman military stations), on the great Essex road, was a direct and much used entry into our parish and to its central points, and that this inn was, and really is now (setting aside Hackney-wick), the first place of refreshment for man and horse on that way, hence its sign.

We next turn due south along what is now called Sidney or Sydney-road, but was formerly known as Wick-lane. On the left, after passing a few cottages still standing, was a beautiful upland field, known as the "Hilly Field," a gradually rising ground until it abruptly sloped down to the Marshes. My readers may, for the moment, sweep the railway—the North London—and its embankment from the view, and conjecture how picturesque this bit of old Homerton looked, ending, or rather bounded by, what is now called Gainsborough-road. A great Board School occupies part of it now, also extensive coal sidings and the railway, while what was still left of it to the south-west is covered by small property. On the right were first the extensive gardens of the last houses in High-street, then a meadow and private gardens and grounds, in the centre of which stood Wick House, latterly the residence of Thomas Baliance, Esq., but some while before that of Leny Smith, Esq. (who, I think, built the house), and whose grounds led down to the Silk Mills belonging to him, situated on Hackney Brook, having a mill dam there and worked by water power. Silk Mill-row, which by an inscription on a stone tablet, was re-fronted (perhaps re-built) in 1820, was a row of cottages for the work-people, who were thus always under the beneficent eye of a good master. Two branches of the trade were carried on at these mills—first, throwing the silk, that is preparing it from the raw state, and thus fitting it for weaving. There were latterly two steam engines employed in place of the water power, by which upwards of 30,000 spindles were set in motion, and between six and seven hundred men, women, and children were employed. When the manufacture of silk was removed from here, horse hair and flock were dressed and manufactured.[105]

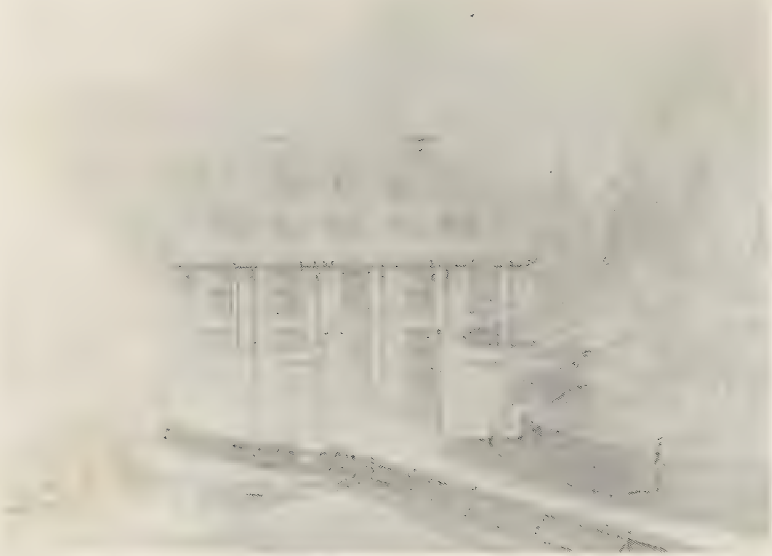
Wick-lane was somewhat serpentine, and after leaving the Silk Mills, and what is now the end of Wick-road and Cassland-road, it passed due south, to Old Ford. There still exists, but the original public-house, its gardens and pleasure grounds have long since passed away, "The White Lion." The North London Railway has been the



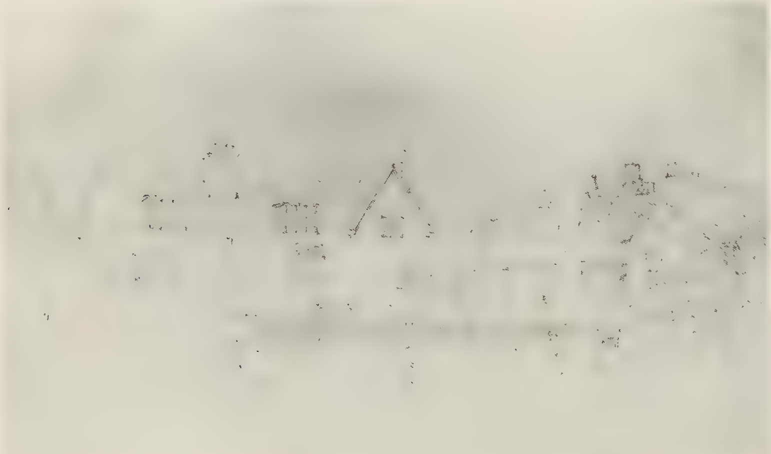
Hackney Wick, looking south towards the rope works (now the site of St Mary of Eton Church). Watercolour by C. Bigot, c1820s. (HAD WP465/1)



Temple Mills. A photograph by Alfred Braddock, 1884.



Balmes House, south front. A pen and ink wash by Robert Schnebbelie, 18 September 1816. (HAD P12054)



Prospect House, the entrance to Clarence Nurseries and the shop of William Pratt, tailor. Lower Clapton Road to the south of present junction with Goulton Road. Pencil sketch about 1830.
(HAD P12084)

chief factor in sweeping old dwellings away, and, in fact, utterly altering the character and best features of this corner of our parish. A high railway embankment covers the White Lion pleasure grounds, and for some time the railway station was next to the public-house. A very high, well-built brick arched bridge carries the line across the road, where it turns due east for the Marshes, and is thence carried on land which an old friend of mine took on a lease of 999 years. The road going direct for Temple Mills is now known as Gainsborough-road, and has roads turning out of it on the right to White Post-lane. A large public-house, "The Victoria," occupies the site of "Wick Hall," a very handsome mansion (of which more in my next). Nearly opposite was another good house, but even when I first knew it rapidly going to ruin. By its side was a rope walk, and a footpath to Homerton across the Hilly Fields. The road then went direct to Temple Mills. Here was formerly only a foot-bridge over the old river, and a ford for horses and carriages, the scene of many mishaps, and some fatal accidents.[106]

Midway between Lea Bridge and Old Ford, the old river Lea sends off a branch known as the Mill river, or the Lead Mill river; this supplied the water-power to the Temple Mills, originally erected by, and belonging to, the Knights Templars, and then to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. There were three water-wheels, and, by the various adaptation of the machinery thus set in motion, corn was ground, trunks of trees were bored to form water main-pipes, some of which are still found (although superseded by iron and lead) in digging along the main thoroughfares of the parish. Also points were ground to pins and needles, and they were polished. Robinson tells us that some 120,000 needles, known as eighths, could be pointed in a day. They were then sent down into Worcestershire, where the eyes were made, and the steel tempered, and they were returned here to receive their finishing polish. Prince Rupert, grandson of James I., and nephew of Charles I., and a leading Royalist commander in the wars of the Commonwealth, after his retirement, became governor of Windsor Castle, interested himself very largely in founders' work, and at these mills invented a gun metal, called after him, "Prince's metal"; using the water-mill for boring the guns after they had been cast. When, however, he died, 29th November, 1682, in the 64th year of his age, the secret of his art died with him.[107]

At this extreme boundary of our parish and county we have the Temple Mills Bridge, also called Marsh-street Bridge. The road beyond this led to Rockholt, in Essex. Because of lands on this side the river, formerly belonging to Andrew de Barking, and afterwards to George Schordiche, this bridge was ordered to be kept in repair by William Teye, of Colchester; so runs the order, dated 10th July, 1512. A short way higher up the old river stands the "White House," known as Beresford's Fishery. At this point is a ferry, called in Rocque's map, 1746, "Tyler's Ferry," in Davies' map of the Marshes of the same date, "Pank's Ferry." This has been a well stocked fishery preserve. The subscription was 1s. a day, or 10s. 6d. a year. I know not whether the present supply of fish renders the sport as valuable. Unfortunately sewage, despite all sanitary precautions, seriously damages the once pellucid Lea. I believe it to be an historical fact that the noted highwayman, "Dick Turpin," frequently made this house his home, and was from time to time in concealment here after some of his predatory excursions. It was probably by this house and across Tyler's Ferry, that good old John Strype, the vicar of Low Leyton, and for some thirty-five years (*i.e.*, from 2nd April, 1689, to 31st May, 1724) afternoon lecturer at the Hackney Parish Church, took his weekly Sabbath walk, coming and going by Marsh Gate, and High-street, Homerton.[108]

When I was a schoolboy all the surroundings here were so rural, and so far removed from the busy haunts of men, that I have again and again, during the spring and summer months, taken solitary rambles along the river banks, watching the stoats and the water voles on land, and the fish in the stream, and seen nature undisturbed at its brightest and its best. Coming up from the Marshes, along what is now called Gainsborough-road, I used to pass, on my left, Wick House, a handsome mansion, standing in beautiful grounds. The front had a good elevation, built in the earlier Georgian era, with a low brick wall, and handsome iron gates in the centre, with a circular carriage sweep within. The back front was decidedly the most artistic, having a central doorway and a bow-fronted elevation on either side. The Hackney Brook (which had done its picturesque duty in the pleasure grounds of the

" White Lion " near by) crossed the road by a low bridge, and formed a small ornamental lake, with a light iron bridge at one end, across this back front of the mansion ; and, with a gently-sloping lawn on either bank, it separated the house from its extensive grounds.[109]

I am much indebted to a correspondent (" R.E.O.") in *The Mercury* for the following particulars. Wick House was for some years the residence of Colonel Mark Beaufoy, F.R.S. He wrote a work on nautical and hydraulic experiments, published in 1834, and dedicated to Lord Brougham. Many of his papers will be found in Thomson's *Annals of Philosophy*. In his experiments he was assisted by his wife, who was also highly talented, but died at a comparatively early age, on 26th August, 1800. He survived her 27 years, remaining a widower. From the inscription on the tomb in Hackney Churchyard, the wife would appear to have been a first cousin, as she is described as " Margaritta Beaufoy, only child of Benjamin and Sarah Beaufoy, of Homerton " ; and that she left a father, husband, and seven children to lament her loss. Her, father, Benjamin Beaufoy, died on 5th June, 1809, aged 81. There is no question that this family afterwards moved over to South Lambeth, Surrey, where a large business is still carried on by them in vinegar, British wines, disinfectants, &c., &c. From a manuscript history of Hackney by John Thomas, surgeon, of Well Street, Hackney, 1825, I have culled the following ;—

> " 1806. A nautical clock was stolen from the observatory of Colonel Beaufoy at Hackney Wick. It had four hands, the first of which points at the number of yards a ship sails : the second shows the hundreds of yards, from 100 to 2,000 ; the third specifies the number of miles, from 1 to 10 ; and the fourth the tens of miles, from 10 to 150. This curious machine was put in motion by a log line, and the whole is considered as a great discovery in navigation." [110]

The closing career of Wick House was that of a gentleman's school —kept by one Dr. Eady. With the many alterations in that particular spot, it was pulled down, and has left no memorial behind. Hackney Wick, or Wyke, was one of the inferior manors of Hackney. It consisted of 200 acres of arable land, 56 acres of meadow land, and a fishery. Richard de Hastyngs and the chapter of Knights' Templars granted it to Robert de Wick—subsequently it was held by Maud, Countess of Salisbury (1425), of the Bishop of London, and the Prior of St. John-of-Jerusalem. In 1435 it was conveyed to Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, and through Edward, son of George, Duke of Clarence, who married the Earl's granddaughter, it came to the Crown. Henry VII. granted it to Sir John Risley, who dying without issue, it reverted once more to the Crown; and Henry VIII., in 1513, granted it to William Compton. Passing through other divers hands, it was in 1765 purchased by one Edward Woodcock * and by his family sold in 1796 to William Gilbey, Esq.[111]

I should imagine from the nature of the accident, which I give *literatim et verbatim* from John Thomas' manuscript book, that the incident referred to must have taken place about this spot, for, with the exception of Bridge-street, Homerton, all the roads, save in this locality, are on a dead level.

> "1805. September 22nd. As a stage-coach was going along Hackney Wick loaded with passengers, a glare of incessant lightning coming on, followed by a heavy rain, the coachman dismounted to lead the horses for greater security. Between the intervals of the flashes it grew pitch dark, when he missed the usual track, and the vehicle coming on the edge of a precipice was overturned and lodged in the wash. Two ladies suffered severely, one had an arm and the other a leg broken; and a gentleman received a severe contusion on the head. The horses were with difficulty saved, but the coach was almost broken to pieces."

If one might venture to suggest the precise locality, this accident must have occurred in the immediate neighbourhood of the Hackney Brook, probably between the end of Cassland Road and the White Lion. As in my knowledge Water Lane was often under water through the overflowing of the brook, which passed along it, so without doubt this the lowest part of the land, save the marshes themselves, might have "wash," as Thomas describes it, when the brook had a freshet, and whether fenced in or no, would render deviation from the beaten track most dangerous. Apart from this most naïvely recorded incident, we have further and interesting evidence of what Homerton must have been only ninety years ago, when in those days of infrequent, or at any rate expensive locomotion, a stage-coach full of passengers should be found travelling along the bottom of Homerton and through Hackney Wick to the City.

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* It is more than probable that Captain Woodcock, John Milton's father-in-law, may have been of the family who held the Wick Manor. A Robert Woodcock was buried in Hackney Churchyard on March 3rd, 1634-5. John Milton was secretary to Cromwell in 1653.

CHAPTER XVIII.

(PAPERS, LII., LIII., LIV.)

THERE are in the Tyssen library some interesting sketches in water-colours of cottages, and whilom lane, passing through Hackney Wick towards Old Ford; with scattered labourers' cottages here and there, we come to Whitepost-lane, the parish boundary between Hackney and Old Ford. Down Whitepost-lane we may pass due east until a place on the old river Lea, nearly half-a-mile south of the Temple Mills, is reached; here at Bully's Point (as it is called) we are at the south-eastern point of the parish—the marsh land on the Hackney side of the river to Temple Mills being known as "Bully Fen." Why so called I have no chronicles before me to show, but it is interesting to note these old world names of out-of-the-way places—so out of the way that perhaps none of my readers will ever visit it; it can, however, be marked easily by travellers on the North London Railway, or from the Great Eastern branch from thence to Stratford; which line, by the way, crosses the several cuts of water courses made by our energetic Saxon, King Alfred, to ensnare the Danes, who had sailed up the river to Ware, and were thus left so much aground as to render their return in their galleys to the Lea mouth, and so into the Thames, impracticable.[112]

A personal visit to the Temple Mills at this juncture reveals the fact that while portions of the stone walls and embankment at the millpond and mill tail are still to be seen, every vestige of the machinery and super structure has been removed. The old public-house or hostelry, "The White Hart," said to have been built in 1513 (*temp.* Henry VIII.), still stands open for refreshment for man and beast, and a "toll bar," one of the very few survivals of that kind, levies a charge of twopence on every horse. The mill stream flows down between bordering willow trees, and I regret to be obliged to confirm a report recently made to our local sanitary authorites by their energetic medical officer, that sewage finds its way into what ought to be a pellucid stream, for unmistakeable feculent masses were floating down it, and in times like these, when the old and fatal scourge of cholera is close on our borders, such a state of things should be as peremptorily as promptly stopped. The old river seemed clear of it, viz., that portion which was above the new bridge, for aroused suspicions led me at once to closer scrutiny. Apart from this remediable evil, I would strongly advise my readers to take a peep at this almost out-of-the-world spot and its picturesque, winding stream, but to choose a fiitting time for such an excursion ; and that would be when the tide, which comes up as far as the East London Waterworks at Lea Bridge, is just at its height—say from one hour before to one hour after the time of high-water (as given in (*Whitaker's Almanack*) at London Bridge, and especially at "spring tides".[112a]

This reminds me of an interesting fact, only just told me by a friend who was an eye-witness of it, and which bears upon the present exploits of Captain Boyton on the Thames and at Earl's Court. It was in 1863, said the narrator, as I approached the ford in my dogcart, through which was then the only way for horse and vehicle, I noticed a large greyhound being held in on the one side, while his owner was making his way by the footbridge to the other bank. I stopped to watch, and to my surprise the greyhound, on being released, rushed after his master at the top of his speed, and crossed the river without hardly wetting his feet. It was the high rate at which he travelled did it, for even the surface of the river was scarcely disturbed, and there was plenty of water, as it was up to my cart axles.

From the Wick into South Hackney there are now three main roads, the Wick-road, Cassland-road, and Victoria Park-road. The

Wick-road, which is on a dead level from the Wick-lane, or Sydney-road (as it is now called) to its western terminus in Water-lane, at the corner of Messrs. Berger's factory. This road is quite of recent date, almost following and marking the original course of the Hackney Brook to the silk mill-tail, and from the absence of all gradients is now the popular road from Hackney to the Wick. The Cassland-road starting from the Wick at the same point as the Wick-road, passed up a gentle ascent along the front of Silk Mill-row (the former mill workers' dwellings), and so onwards in a westerly direction passing Hackney-terrace, and ending in Well-street. In my young days, even for a few years of my professional life, while this road was known by the name of its only row of good residental houses (the first erections on Sir John Cass' estate) as Hackney-terrace, its popular name was "the Bay," or Botany Bay, so nicknamed because of the many questionable characters that sought asylum in the Wick, and were ofttimes not only candidates for, but eventually contrived to secure transportation to Botany Bay itself, the early name of our first penal settlement near Sydney, new South Wales, to which England transported her first convicts in 1787. Dr. John Thomas, quoted in my former paper, states authoritatively that John Adams, one of the mutineers on the ship Bounty, and as far as it is known the last survivor, found accidentally by an American vessel at Pitcairne Island in the Pacific Ocean (twenty years after their escape from Tahiti), was a native of Hackney, and may have resided in this corner of our parish. The road was its present width, but bordered on either side by garden plots, and here and there small shanties—the dwellings of the gardeners themselves.[113]

I cannot resist narrating a striking fact in my own history in this very locality, confirming as it does the former questionable character of some of the inhabitants, and the protection which a calling like my own secures. Called out one night to attend a poor woman at this extremity of the district, the way being dark and dreary, I asked the messenger, who was my patient's husband, to wait for me that I might have his company and escort. When we reached what is now the corner of Gascoigne-road, we came to the last gas lamp, the rest of the way being unlighted. Expressing my own wish to know the time, I took out my watch (a presentation gold one) and noted that it was one o'clock. I went on to my patient, whose case proved difficult and dangerous. When at last I could leave, the man gratefully offered to escort me once more, and on arriving again at this gas lamp, standing out in its loneliness, I again remarked I should like to see the time, for they had no clock, it was then four o'clock on a cold winter's morning, my companion took note of the time also. For two days the patient did well, but on the third day I found her in great distress both of body and mind, and on inquiring the cause a good neighbour who was with her, told me her husband had been taken up for stealing a watch the evening before, and that to procure more nourishment for his wife.

In the course of a few years all this garden ground was cleared off, the trustees of the Sir John Cass Estate had the land levelled and laid out, and built upon as we now see it. From an interesting report now before me, laid before the Hackney Vestry by Mr. G. B. Holmes, L.C.C., I find that a Mr. Cass lived, and carried on the business of a carpenter, where Lauriston Road now runs. He had only one son, John Cass, who lived and died in the same house as his father. In the minutes of the Select Vestry, this father, Thomas Cass, Esq., is first mentioned on 6th April, 1686, as present with Lord Bishop Wood and others; and no doubt at this early date the family had become important in the parish. On the 1st May, 1699, John Cass was chosen into the Vestry in the room of his father, who, I should presume, was dead. On 14th March, 1702, he appears as Colonel John Cass, and his name is mentioned once more as at a vestry meeting on 9th December, 1703. The father and son (thrifty men) seem to have purchased land, when land was cheap, and have thus gradually amassed wealth. John Cass became successively a member of the Court of Common Council, then an alderman, a sheriff, and eventually Lord Mayor of London, when he was knighted. His property is situate in what is now known as the Cassland Estate, bordering on Grove Street, and the South Hackney Common, also in Hill Street, and in the Hackney Marshes, and an estate in Poplar. By his first will dated 4th May, 1709, he founded the Cass's Charity, for the benefit of the natives of the parishes of Aldgate, and Hackney; and an elementary school was to be established, and maintained in Aldgate; and an advanced school in Hackney; and the trustees of the charity were to pass the scholars from the elementary to the advanced school.

If they were not sufficiently qualified for such promotion, they might select scholars from any other school they thought fit. Sir John Cass subsequently became a member of Parliament for the City. In July, 1718, he made another will, more favourable to Aldgate. Finding his end approaching, he sent for his solicitor, and while in the act of signing the several sheets of the will, he fell back in his chair and expired with his pen in his hand, at the early age of 53.[114]

On reference to Strype's last edition of Stowe's London, I find that Sir John Cass was elected Sheriff of London in 1711, the Lord Mayor of that year being Sir Gilbert Heathcote, members of whose family were for many years resident in Hackney. The Victoria Park-road starts from a point nearly opposite the "White Lion," and skirts Victoria Park as far as the French Hospital; passing in front of that building it proceeds due west, crossing Grove-street, and in an almost straight line to Cambridge Heath. In the last century this road had on its southern side meadows and market gardens, with tolerably substantial dwellings at intervals, occupied by the market gardeners themselves. A few of these still remain, and when Victoria Park was purchased by Her Majesty's Commissioners of Woods and Forests, some of these dwellings were retained, and still exist as residences for the local officials of the park.

As so comparatively small a portion of the park is really in Hackney, a brief notice only need be given. An Act of Parliament was passed in 1840, authorising the sale of York House, Westminster, and out of the proceeds purchasing certain lands bounded on the south by Sir George Duckett's canal; on the north-east by Old Ford-lane; on the north west by Grove-street-lane and Grove-street, and by lands belonging to Sir John Cass' Charity, and St. Thomas's Hospital; and on the west by the Regent's Canal, and Bonner's Hall Field, which it includes. For well designed tree-planting—and trees which flourish magnificently—and for ornamental gardening, there are no parks around London which can compare with it. It is now under the charge of the London County Council, and in this matter they have proved themselves to be most liberal caterers for the public; from musical bands for the general public, gymnastic apparatus, and bathing lakes for the rising race, and even a sea sand pit for the babies; with conservatories, greenhouses, tropical gardens, restaurants, and other conveniences, suited to the tastes, and wants, of the general public and both sexes. From Hackney Wick pursuing one's way up Victoria Park-road, we have on its northern side streets and houses, which fifty years ago were open grounds, until Gascoyne-road is reached. This is a well-designed road, crescentic in shape, and forming the eastern boundary of South Hackney Common; the other side having a line of prettily designed villa residences.

The Common is another of those plots, which, having commoners' rights, might not be built upon, but as Lammas land, was shut off from the public for a large portion of each year. These have been bought up, and it is now dedicated to the public for ever. Its northern boundary is formed by the gardens of Hackney Terrace, and an open space; but within the last few years another line of houses has been erected, and a road running out of Gascoyne Road fronts them, and skirts the Common. I hear the road is to be carried along the northern boundary westward, into what is now called Church Crescent. It is to be hoped that further builders' encroachments in this direction have ceased On the western boundary are Groombridge and other roads, leading from Grove Street to the Common; and a western road running between that end of the Common and the French Hospital. Looking at this beautiful building, and its very picturesque grouuds, one cannot but exclaim "what a refuge of nationalities our beloved country is." Surely we in very deed fulfil the declaration of Holy Writ, even to strangers, "and kings shall be their nursing fathers, and queens their nursing mothers." We may have our Imperial Institute, just endowed and erected, a glorious and pacific combination of our own commerce, and world-wide territories, which (as an acknowledged power of good and for good) we pray our God may never be reduced or break up, for

> "We've sailed wherever ship could sail,
> We've planted many a mighty state,
> Pray God our greatness may not fail,
> Through craven fears of being great."

This is my prayer for these critical times.[115]

To return. This French Hospital was founded in our land—Old Street, St. Luke's to wit—by French refugees, who themselves felt safe at home, (although strangers in the land) for the succour of their distressed countrymen in England; so writes Mr. Smiles, and cites this as the most important of their institutions. Its founder was a Monsieur de

Gastigny, a Frenchman who was Master of the Buckhounds to the Prince of Orange, while in Holland, and accompanied him to England when he became William III., on the deposition of James II. He bequeathed, at his death, in 1708, £1000 towards founding a Hospital in London for distressed French Protestants. In eight years the accumulated interest thereon, and other benefactions, enabled the trustees in 1716, to purchase a piece of ground of the Ironmongers' Company, in Old Street, St. Luke's, and take on lease four acres of land of the City of London. On this a building was erected for 80 poor French Protestants. A charter of incorporation was granted by George I. in 1718, the Earl of Galway being the first governor. The French merchants of Toulon liberally contributed; The Earl of Galway left £1,000 in 1720, and in 1721 Baron Hervart de Huninge gave £4,000. By these increased means additions were made to the buildings, so that, in 1760, 234 poor were admitted. The present building, erected (on the removal of the former) after the designs of Mr. Robert Lewis Roumien, now accommodates 40 men and 20 women. The architect, who was also one of the directors, is himself a descendant of a Hugenot family, the Roumiens of Languedoc. (Thornbury's *Old and New London*).

We are now upon the estate of the late H. H. Norris—of blessed memory—the connection and associate of the Watsons, and other good Churchmen of a bygone day, already noticed in these sketches. He was a man universally respected, and so highly esteemed by those high in power in the State, that, although always refusing a bishopric, which had been again and again offered him, they frequently consulted him when a vacancy occurred on the episcopal bench. The French Hospital stands upon the site of his garden. Just in that part of Victoria Park Road, were passed, formerly, two very pretty and striking cottages, each having a conical-shaped thatched roof—one was occupied by the head gardener, the other by the coachman of Mr. Norris. In a field adjoining might also be noticed oftentimes grazing a black cob with a bob-tail, turning grey from age. This was the old cleric's favourite saddle horse (for he was seldom seen in his carriage), and there was a legend that on it he had travelled into every parish in England. The Rev. H. H. Norris's residence was in that part of Grove Street which is now called Church Crescent, at the back of South Hackney Church.

It was a very large old-fashioned mansion, standing back from the road, and in the road itself were some fine old elm trees—in fact this part of our village was remarkably pretty, and well merited its title "Grove" Street. But name and appearance are alike altered.[116]

This part of Grove Street, at the back of the church, is now known as Church Crescent, the continuation towards Victoria Park is called the Broadway and Lauriston Road, which also gives the name to the road in front of South Hackney Church—once a footpath between quick-set hedges—well known to the writer, for at the end of that pathway stood a preparatory school, kept by one Mrs. Todd (*temp*. 1826), at which he first became a scholar. I believe the original house is still standing behind, and forming part of Mitchell's Brewery and Tap, and that in the garden behind still stands a mulberry tree—a pleasant addition to the playground when the fruit was ripe. At the southern end of the hedged pathway were Norris's Fields, extending westward to Shore Place (now Shore Road), and in width almost to the building line of the new Board Schools. A large house on the right hand was the residence of the late George Offer, Esq., J.P., and the library of his marvellous collection of several editions of the Bible, of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, and his other works, and of deeply interesting *reliquiæ* gathered from the Low Countries immediately after the Battle of Waterloo; my visits to that library were not a few, and the pleasure and profit derived therefrom are not forgotten. Some other good houses were on the right hand side, doubtless Sir John Cass's among them, and then our way was apparently blocked by the old "Three Colt's Tavern," which then faced the road, crosswise, (its successor is on the right hand side). It was a regular country tavern, with pleasure grounds annexed, and I believe the several arbours, &c., are now on their original site, forming the restaurant in that part of Victoria Park which leads from Grove Street to Bishop Bonner's Gate. On the eastern side of the road is the Jews' burial ground. This belongs to what is called the Hamburgh Synagogue, and was set apart in the year 1788. From the insignia over many of the headstones, viz., "the hand clasped in hand," many of the Cohens have found their last earthly resting-place here.[117]

Retracing our steps we come back to the noble-looking church of South Hackney. The erection of a parish church for the South Hackney district was found desirable, and undertaken primarily in the endowment and building of a chapel-of-ease in Well Street, at the corner of St. Thomas' Place, in the year 1806, on ground given by J. De Kewer, Esq., sufficiently extensive to erect a good church, and churchyard at its rear. It was called the Chapel of St. John-of-Jerusalem; was an extremely plain buiding, and seated about 750 persons. The cost of chapel and endowment was about £11,000, the endowment being fixed at £90 per annum. The organ was given by Messrs. W. and H. Sikes. Many of the large contributors were non-parishioners. The chapel was dedicated on 13th May, 1810. The Rev. Henry Handley Norris was the first vicar, afterwards becoming rector. With indefatigable zeal, and great liberality, Mr. Norris devoted the greater part of the emoluments from the living to works of charity and parochial purposes.

The suddenly rapid increase of the population rendered the chapel too small for the congregation, so that at this time, *i.e.*, in 1842, a meeting of the inhabitants was called to consider the ways and means for the erection of a new and much larger parish church, and to select suitable ground for that purpose. Robinson tells us that a plot near Shore Place (road), belonging to St. Thomas' Hospital, was selected, and it was agreed to raise £10,000 for the erection; but the scheme fell through, and the question remained in abeyance until about 1844, when vigorous efforts were once more made, and the church, as we now see it, and the churchyard around it, was erected and consecrated in 1845, and Mr. Norris' ardent desires were thus accomplished before he passed away, his death occurring on 4th December, 1850, when nearly 80 years of age. The church is cruciform, in the pointed style of the 13th and 14th centuries, with tower and spire nearly 200 feet high. It is built of Kentish rag, but of a grit so sensitive to atmospheric influences, that great fears have been entertained of the safety of the building, especially of the spire; however, after considerable expense had been entailed in scaffolding, replacing crumbling stone and applying an anti-corrosive fluid, it is believed the mischief has been stopped, and the building may stand for many a year, a monument of the munificence and architectural skill of the last-but-one generation of church builders. It has a most melodious peal of eight bells. One of the stained glass windows in the nave was put in by the Hackney Church of England schoolboys, the Rev. H. H. Norris being their vice-president.[118]

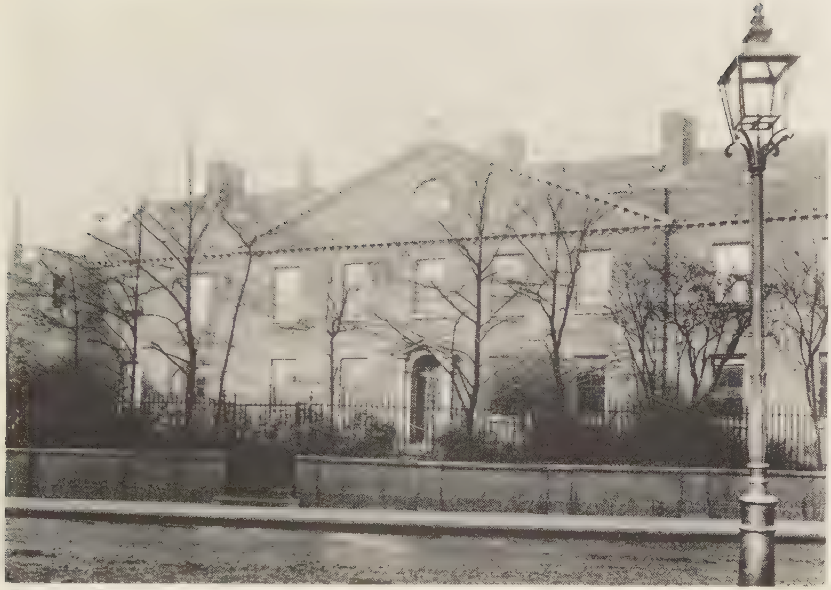
The interior of the church is very fine, but owing to the shape and deep tints of its windows, is somewhat dark. I regret to note that the churchyard is in a sad state of disrepair. Across the churchyard, and situate in what is now known as Church Crescent, stand the Monger's Almshouses. These are on a good elevation and have been rebuilt within the last few years on the same site *i.e.*, "a piece of ground in Well Street," (as it was called in the original deed,) on which six almshouses were built of brick, as by the will of Henry Monger, Esq., dated 17th April, 1669. Towards the buildings £400 was to be given, and an annuity of £12 to be thus distributed: £9 at 30s., quarterly payments, to each of six poor men, parishioners, and over the age of 60 years, the balance, £3, to be laid up in stock towards repairs of the buildings. Each of these alms-men, if married, may have their wives with them, but should the man die, the widow must leave, and loses all interest in the charity. I may here state that this fact, unalterable as part of the original scheme, appeared to press so severely on the women, who were thus deprived of husband and home at one fell stroke, that when it was determined to erect a memorial to the Rev. H. H. Norris, it was further determined that they should be endowed almshouses (as they now stand in Victoria Park Road), and that to these Monger widows should be given the preference.[119]

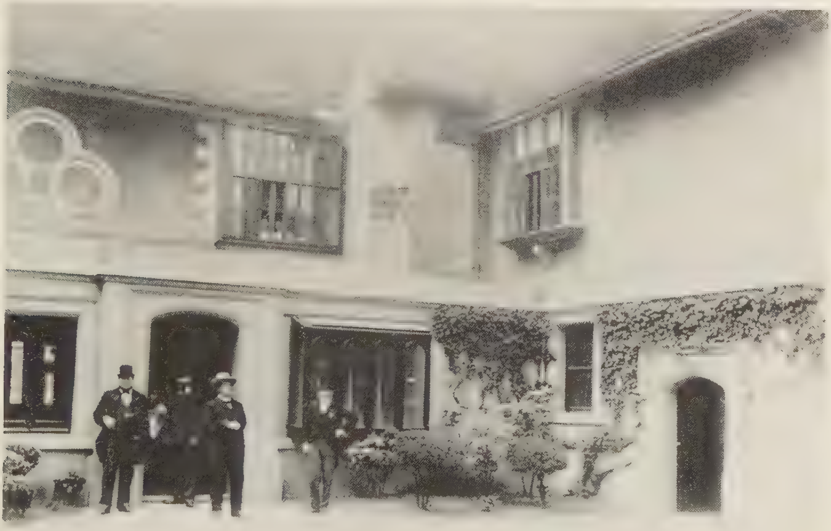
The election of Monger's Almsmen is vested in the trustees of Sir John Cass' Charity, on the recommendation of the rector and churchwardens of South Hackney, the aforesaid trustees holding the twenty-three acres of Marsh lands from which the annuity arises. It may interest some of my readers to note that Henry Monger's name appears in the list of Vestrymen on 16th April, 1661, and on 5th June, 1670, certain vestrymen were appointed trustees to look after these almshouses. Also that on 18th December, 1731, certain Vestrymen were ordered to wait upon Lady Elizabeth Cass, relict of Sir John Cass, to urge her to fill up a vacancy in the almshouses, which, should she fail to do, they would exercise their right. And again on 13th May, 1732, it having been found that Lady Elizabeth Cass, having put women in the almshouses instead of men, as Monger's will directs, she be requested to remove them forthwith. From the west door of South Hackney Church, a fine wide road, King Edward's Road, runs due west to the Triangle in Mare Street.

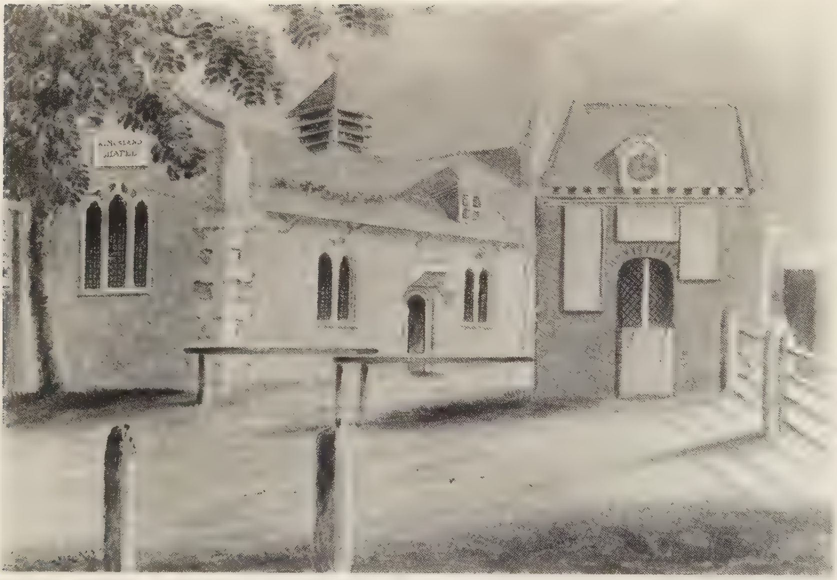
I have a strong impression in my own mind that this road was laid out, as far as Shore-place, years before its full dedication to the parish, and its bordering of houses, many of which are most substantial, well built, and really stylish residences, with good gardens, especially on the northern side, at their back. The road looked fairly levelled, although the grass had so over-grown it, that it looked part of the field itself—these fields being known as Norris' Fields—and Victoria Park-road, running parallel to the other, being also formed out of the same meadow land. Reaching Shore-place we come upon well-cultivated nursery (vegetable) grounds, from which when a boy I have had many a toothsome lettuce and radish. It was then the custom to send a basket, and have the same vegetables drawn on the spot. I need not state how it improved their flavour. A narrow pathway carried the end of King Edward's-road into Tryon's-place, subsequently it was carried, as now, straight into Mare-street. Shore-place was no thoroughfare for carriages beyond the carriage drive leading to Shore House. This substantial residence, situate in its own extensive grounds, stood somewhere about Nos. 35 to 39, King Edward's-road; the grounds met those of Mr. John Morley, the Eagles, Well-street; a very near relative (by marriage), who took there his young bride in 1814, often referred to the house and its surroundings in those earlier days.[120]

A quaint old house—forming a pretty water colour picture in the Tyssen Library—is called Jane Shore's house. It has a ground floor, and first floor only, with a gable end on one side. About it are indications of a market gardener's residence, which it probably was, and I may have often seen it, but forgotten it. Although as my readers must have discovered ere this, I have a greater liking for the old than the new, for absolute rusticity, to bricks and mortar, however set up; yet I freely confess that the latter style far surpasses the former state of things, as we pursue our way towards the Gore-road, and its gateway into the park, and the sweeping roads with villa residences to the right and left. Here was formerly only a narrow footway with brickfields on the right, and old houses and tumble down shanties on the left. As you pursued your way towards the Bonner's field entry into Bethnal Green, there was a narrow zig-zag path between high clay banks, and I think on either side either brickfields or market gardens *i.e.*, sixty-five years ago. One of the buildings, a wooden erection, had on its first, that is top floor, to which you ascended by steep stairs, a room fitted up as a chapel. Here the Wesleyans first gathered, until they built and moved to their better chapel in Pleasant-place, now Paragon-road. Some other Nonconformist body used it afterwards, until it, with its neighbouring tenements, was very properly improved off the face of the neighbourhood. Many a deed of darkness was perpetrated along that narrow banked-in pathway, and but for lack of time and space might be recounted.[121]

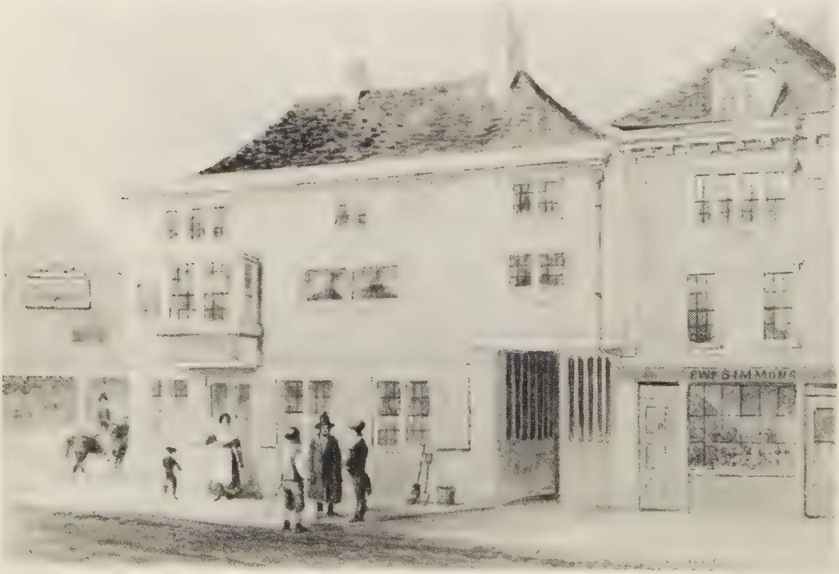
Turning back we had the same wide road, Shore-road, which took us into Well-street. On the east side was an old style family house, having its back to the road, and garden front, which was for many years the residence of the Rev. John Clayton, the celebrated Nonconformist divine. In a row of very upright houses, still standing, and facing Tudor-road, was a worthy family, one of the sons being a school-fellow. His eldest brother, too fond of staying out billiard playing, was one bright moonlight night passing along a narrow pathway between Shacklewell and the Downs, and along a newly white-washed wall. Three men were coming in an opposite direction, and (as came out in evidence) thought to play him a practical joke—to simulate highway men. My poor friend took out a large pocket knife with fixed spring back, and as the men fell upon him dealt the nearest one a blow which proved immediately fatal. In these days "Manslaughter of a mild type," might have been the verdict, but sterner measures then prevailed. Yet even to the astonishment of all, especially his family's neighbours, he was sentenced to death, without hope of reprieve; the judge laying emphatic stress on his drawing and fixing his dagger-like knife, prior to the encounter, and even carrying such a knife about him, as showing a murderous intent. The jury themselves were aghast at the outcome of their verdict. That end of Hackney was canvassed, the Rev. H. H. Norris, my father, and many others moved earnestly and ardently in their appeal to the Crown, and the punishment was commuted to three years' imprisonment; but his past life, the anxiety of the trial, the horror of the scaffold (for time was short between sentence and execution in those days), the revulsion of feeling, and the subsequent confinement in the gaol of Newgate, all conspired to do their work, and he came out of prison only to die.[122]


Brooke House, Clapton, from the road. Photograph, April 1892. (HAD G3207)


Brooke House. The north west corner of the quadrangle of the house, with some of the medical staff, including Dr Adams, who is the figure wearing the light coloured hat. Photograph by Alfred Braddock, 1896. (HAD G3207)



St Bartholomew's Chapel, Kingsland Road (the former leper hospital) and Dalston Tollgate. A watercolour looking west about 1800. (HAD WP12103)



The Three Crowns public house, corner of Stoke Newington High Street and Stoke Newington Church Street. Watercolour by Thomas Hosmer Shepherd, about 1842. (HAD WP8571)

CHAPTER XIX.

Papers LV., LVI., LVII.

LEST my readers should think I have spoken too disparagingly of the row of houses, or shanties, at the farthest end of the original Shore-place, I may inform them that in Rocque's map of 1745 they are dignified with the title of Water Gruel-row, and my earliest recollections lead me to consider such a designation as not amiss. Midway between this row and the parish boundary towards Bethnal Green I note a mansion, standing on a plot of ground, well fenced round, and with a large garden ; but what it was, and who could have occupied it, I can find no record. Doubtless, if not the original Shore-place, which it may have been, it was the residence of one of those great ones whose names remain on our ancient records, but whose habitations and local doings have passed away altogether.[123]

In taking my readers along the old highway, Well-street, I cannot do better than start from Mare-street, which it leaves with so wide an entrance that one is led to infer there must have been, originally, either an enclosed triangular space or, perhaps, a clump of trees ; at any rate, such an opening bespeaks the original importance of such a thoroughfare. On the right hand side, as I have before noticed, are some of the oldest smaller tradesmen's houses in the parish, affording a good sample of the prevailing style of building shops, and the like, some 200 years ago. Beyond those shops is, and was, a wheelwright's, then a baker's, kept, 60 years ago, by a Mr. Austin, then an oilman's shop, and, if I remember, next to that a builder's and painter's (which still exists), but where there was then a garden, well-stocked with flowers and fruit trees. Of course, the garden ground has long ere this been otherwise utilized, but, were it not, plum trees and rose trees have lost their charms in the nearer approach of London smoke.[124]

Opposite was a large house, once the abode of some local magnate, with a good-sized garden in front. We then came to a row of well-built family residences, with the ordinary garden or forecourt in front, and good, large gardens behind. Some of them are still standing, and an asylum, *i.e.*, the Hand-in-Hand and Widows' Home Asylums for the Jews, occupies one or two, others having been taken down and rebuilt for warehouses, and the greater part of the once extensive garden ground has but recently been secured by the London General Omnibus Company for coach-houses, stable, and yard. A few houses, scarcely at all altered from their original style of some 100 years or more ago, bring us to St. Thomas-place, or, as it was formerly called, "Banister Alley," skirting St. Andrew's Church and schools, and leading to St. Thomas-square. On the other side, after the shops, is a row of small houses, private residences; and then we come to a very handsome dwelling-house, with an extensive and beautiful garden, forming, years ago, the north-western corner of Shore-road.[125]

Before we go further into Well-street I may remind my readers of a former chronicler of Hackney, already alluded to, who it seems was a dweller in Well-street in 1832. I mean John Thomas, surgeon, and who probably went over to Ohio, United States, soon after that date. My friend, Mr. George Chambers, has kindly searched the rate books of that period to find out whereabouts he lived in Well-street, but in those days houses were not numbered, and Christian names of the ratepayers were not given. However, to satisfy any of my more curious readers, I may state that there were two ratepayers named Thomas—one rated at £12 yearly rental, and paying 6s. rates; the other at £14, and paying 7s. What halcyon days! I judge my *confrere* to have been a bit of a Puritan —a survival of the Pilgrim Fathers, and of like faith. His book, "History of Hackney," in many parts most beautifully written, and sometimes in such small characters (I allude to the foot notes) as absolutely to require a magnifying glass to decipher them. On the title page is the date 1832, but there has been a piece cut out; why, or what I cannot find out. The book had subsequently passed through the hands of an Oxford University graduate, in the hope that through his intervention it might have been published; but not only had that remained unaccomplished, but from the appearance of the volume our Oxford graduate (I presume a churchman of the old school) proved a censor, too, and erasures and clippings, certainly affecting hyper-Nonconformist views, are met with rather frequently. We are all most decidedly more tolerant in these latter days. However, the book contains matters of interest, and I shall not be slow to avail myself of them, of course acknowledging their source.[126]

Perhaps I may here give John Thomas's explanation of the title "Well" as given to this road. In the earliest records, 1850, it is so called, and is mentioned even in 1484, and Dr. Robinson does not (as far as I have searched) venture on a reason, but here our friend steps in. He ascribes it to a well which may perhaps still exist by Cottage-place, Well-street, latterly covered by a pump, and affixed to an adjacent wall. This well, Thomas believes, to be coeval with the palace of the Priors of St. John of Jerusalem—of which more hereafter. Possibly it may have been partially a mineral spring, or at any rate from its contiguity to a monastic establishment, have had a special holy reputation, and hence the road to it would naturally be named after it, so that our Well-street may be another link in the chain of the ancient, and ecclesiastical reputation of our parish. To return, at the north-eastern corner of Shore-road is another large mansion, and beyond that is the "Eagles," with its beautiful and still spacious grounds. An interest attaches to that house and its offices, from the fact that it was built, and the grounds laid out by the late Mr. John Morley, founder of the great Nottingham firm of J. & R. Morley, and father of Mr. John Morley, of Upper Clapton, and of his deceased brother, Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P. I believe his children were born in Homerton-row, but they were very young when their brilliantly successful father (whom I well remember) moved into his new house in Well-street, and there he died. Since then the house has had several occupants, the last, Mr. John Husband, M.P., and on his removal the house and grounds were taken, and are being well used by the Liberal (Gladstonian) Club.[127]

Beyond were open fields and market gardens, until we come to Percy-road, for St. Thomas's-road was not then formed, nor, until within the last fifty years, were the houses completing that side of the road erected. On the north side of Well-street, beginning at the Church Mission room, we have what was once the estate of Mr. John De Kewer, of Well-street, whose name first appears in the select Vestry minutes of our parish, as elected a Vestryman, on 1st February, 1741, and also at Easter, 1746, as John De Kewer, of Well-street; from that date until the time of his death, which is notified in the Vestry minutes of 6th October, 1764, he seems to have been a very active and useful Vestryman. On the 28th March, 1769, application is made by his nephew, a Mr. De Kewer, for his uncle's pew (he is termed the late Justice De Kewer, so I suppose he was a magistrate) but under some special enactment, or bye-law, passed during his late uncle's life-time, the application was refused.

The estate, as I first remember it, consisted of the church plot, and churchyard; then two grass paddocks, these went back as far as what is now Loddiges-road, and extended along that line due east to what is now Palace-road. The house, now known as Frampton House, is divided into three tenements, and the built-out shops in front cover what was once a fine forecourt with high iron railings and some noble elm trees. Behind the house was a flower garden, and large kitchen garden with spacious offices, stabling, barn, &c., &c., a frequent happy hunting ground of the writer in his schoolboy days, with the junior members of the Frampton family, who were schoolfellows.[128]

From my old familiar friend, the Rev. De Kewer Williams, I gathered interesting information. It appears that his father was surveyor to Mr. John De Kewer, who died in 1818, and that as he happened to come into the world, as the aforesaid old man was going out of it, Mr. Williams, senr., who entertained the highest esteem for Mr. De Kewer, had his son named after him at the baptismal font in Hackney Church. About the same time a Charity Trust was founded to be called "Mr. De Kewer's Gift, for the bestowal on the 1st of February yearly, of one or two sacks of coal, and one or two bushels of potatoes to every poor inhabitant of Grove-street and Well-street, who should regularly attend divine service at St. John's Chapel, and no other place of worship. With Mr. John De Kewer were associated Dr. Thomas Day Frampton, Archdeacon Watson, and Rev. H. H. Norris. The De Kewer estate afterwards passed into the Frampton family, who were by marriage closely related to the De Kewer's. The De Kewers are really a Kentish family, and their family tombs and memorials are to be found in St. Peter's church, between Margate and Ramsgate.

I must correct an error in my last. The De Kewer Gift was to be entitled "Mrs. De Kewer's Gift"—a bequest of a good husband to be handed down in his wife's (then widow's) name. Soon after the Frampton, *née* De Kewer, Estate came into the builders' hands, and the old house, Frampton House, was divided as we see it now; it narrowly escaped destruction by fire, one of the shops in front being burnt out. Some of my readers may remember a very handsome—at any rate attractive—canopy over the entrance door, something after the Italian renaissance style, and some—archæologically mad—thought it was a survival, and a removal, from the Old Prior's Palace, which had been situated near by. My friend, the Rev. De Kewer Williams, has hopelessly exploded that notion by informing me, as I now do my readers, that it was a cleverly designed door porch of his father's, and was in wood, not stone. I can only add it did him very much credit, for it was certainly a good copy from the antique. When the final alterations in the house were made it was taken down, and I have heard it is somewhere in the Tyssen family.

I have already referred to the Frampton's garden, and I must not pass it by without a pointed reference to their estimable and worthy head gardener, the late Mr. Holmes. When the estate was planned out and divided into plots by the Glaskin, Frampton Park, and Havelock roads, a plot was secured by Mr. Holmes (I trust on most advantageous terms) in Frampton Park-road for dwelling-house, greenhouses, and garden, since known as the Frampton Park Nursery. Here Mr. Holmes deservedly thrived and prospered. He had a nursery in his house (for he had a family) as well as on the grounds. He became an active and most useful Guardian, and general parish official, but died, as it seemed to us, too early, leaving a worthy family - a son and successor—and a still more reputable name behind him. His talent as a practical gardener was much appreciated, and his son fully carried out and maintained the reputation of the father. He, too, has passed away, and only just after his election to the important, at any rate conspicuous, post of chairman of the Central Hackney Conservative Association, and as one of the leaders and promoters of the Chrysanthemum Society. Of the Frampton family I ought also to speak. The head—the late Dr. Frampton, senr.,—was one of the early physicians at the London Hospital, Mile End. He died at an advanced age, and was accounted in his time a highly popular and successful physician; he was just retiring as I made his acquaintance. His son, Dr. Algernon Frampton, succeeded him, and was one of my tutors; he died in middle life. A younger son (a clergyman eventually) and an orphan cousin, who was brought up with them, were schoolfellows at the Church of England School. This latter—Major Heathfield Frampton—was in the Indian battle of Aliwal, where he lost an arm; was subsequently in the Crimean War. Here he was surprised in the advanced trenches in company with a Captain Clarke. The Russian advanced posts, seeing his condition, at once gave quarter, and carried him and his companion within their lines. From thence they were passed up to St. Petersburgh as prisoners of war—were treated *en parole* by our then magnanimous enemy, the Czar of Russia—had every respect shown them and reasonable comfort allowed—and were eventually exchanged. My dear old schoolfellow—my fast friend—has joined the great majority.[129]

Beyond the Frampton House we come to Palace-road, a reminder of the glories of olden time in this particular part of our parish. Here stood, with its sumptuous surroundings, the Palace of the Prior of the Knights of St. John-of-Jerusalem—one who in his political position was reckoned the first baron of the kingdom. I must remind my readers that the original holders of the Manor of Hackney, and head of its spiritualities and temporalities, were the Knights Templars, the remains of whose house were to be seen at the upper end of Church-street, Hackney, known as the Templars' House; that when they fell into disgrace their possessions were confiscated, and their lands and power were transferred to the Prior and Knights of St. John-of-Jerusalem. The residence in question, as far as we can form an idea from the prints still extant of the building, was far from representing the character and position of its ecclesiastical lordly occupant. It seems, as far as its frontage is concerned, to present three gables, the walls being marked with diagonal lines, an entrance door in the centre, another somewhat to one side, which must have been subsequently made when the building was divided into tenements; a chimney at either end, which, being evidently a later edition, goes to prove the antiquity of the original structure. A window is shown on either side the entrance door, but unequal in size and shape, and on the first floor three windows equally irregular in form and appearance. The central window, however, in the middle gable, and over the original doorway, is surmounted by a large and typical Maltese cross. The Lord Prior had precedence of all the lay barons in Parliament, and at the present moment our H.R.H. the Prince of Wales has for one of his titles and offices, "The Grand Prior of the Order of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem.

To account for the comparative insignificance of this so-called palace it may be well to remind my readers that it was, after all, only an appanage to the head Preceptory, and house of the Order in Clerkenwell; still represented by that interesting bit of antiquity, which (I presume because it was out of sight, was therefore out of mind) has been on that account permitted to remain as "St. John's Gate, Clerkenwell," the gateway to the original priory; and there, in these more enlightened days, it will be preserved, and stand (as it should) for many a year to come, in evidence of what could be constructed by builders, of no jerry order, in the "long, long ago." John Thomas tells us that when he last inspected the building it was rapidly going to decay, being occupied by a miserable lot of tenants of the lowest caste, and he saw in the original banqueting chamber of the palace a motley group of men, women, and children, and sacks of soot piled up at one end. Of course our predecessors of that day had as much respect for the relics of antiquity as they have deep concern for the perpetuation of that ugly and out of place building, "the Old Town Hall," which, because it brings in an income of £200 a year, entailing a minute fraction of a farthing on the average rate-paying parishioner should be permitted to remain an utterly incongruous screen before our monumental bit of antiquity, "the Old Tower." The palace and its offices doubtless occupied a considerable space of ground, and its memory is perpetuated in a veritable maze of small tenements, mostly built of its debris. I wandered among them the other day, and beginning from Palace-road, noted St. John's-place, Priory-place, Eaton-place, and Cottage-place. This latter is an absolute disgrace to our parish, and did the authorities but do their duty and raze it to the ground, they might almost recoup themselves the £200 which would be lost if the Old Town Hall came down also. I forbear description; let our Board of Works (or whoever it may concern) visit the place themselves.[130]

I think John Thomas was right, and that here, affixed to the wall of one of the cottages, was the pump, signs of which still remain, which covered the well from which our Well-street took its name. It may have been accounted a holy well, although I do not imagine Mr. R. C. Hope has included it in his book just published on the holy wells of England. If pilgrims were few who visited this spot, my readers may look back and with the mind's eye recall the monastic and military cavalcades which from time to time, as an escort to the lordly prior, came down from Clerkenwell along old Well-street to visit this house and its offices under his ecclesiastical rule. The well known history of Cardinal Wolsey shows that these princes of the Church, and as in the case of our prior, half military too, would seldom move about without the pomp and panoply of warlike service. Several old houses from Palace-road to Cottage-place still exist, and there is one formerly occupied by a Mr. Ashby, a baker, which used to be considered, when I was a boy, to be the oldest bakery in Hackney. I have also a faint reminiscence that at the back of the premises there still existed some of the old stables, occupied by the horses of the prior's mounted retinue.[131]

On the south side of Well-street, opposite Frampton House (which I should have stated was built, according to a stone tablet upon it, in 1696, *temp.* William and Mary), are several old houses, some of them dating before that period—and I have a faint impression that the John Thomas, surgeon, before quoted, lived in one of them; they are of all sizes, and some are undoubtedly ancient. We then come to a more pretentious building, well built and well kept up. This was originally the Hackney Theological Seminary. The scheme was commenced in 1802 by the Rev. John Eyre, of Hackney, Secretary of the London

Missionary Society, and the Rev. George Collison. A Mr. Townshend, a wealthy resident of Homerton, bequeathed £10,000, and the building was completed in 1803. Associated with them was the Rev. Matthew Wilks, of the Tabernacle, Moorfields, and the Rev. Rowland Hill, of Surrey Chapel. The object was training young men for the ministry, and sending them out to supply vacancies; and aiding in the erection and enlarging of Protestant Dissenting Chapels. The Rev. G. Collison was Theological tutor in 1842. The College has but lately been removed to Hampstead, and the buildings are now used as a supplementary workhouse for the parish of Bethnal Green. We then come to Holcroft-road, I name it because here are some excellent almshouses, called the Goldsmiths' and Jewellers' Asylum, for aged married couples, or widows, or widowers. There are sixteen rooms, each occupied by single or married pensioners.[132]

We then find Well-street again widening, and having, as it bears to the north-east, two roads running out of it southwards, Grove-street, here called Lauriston-road, and Hackney-terrace, now Cassland-road. At the angle formed by the two roads, a very plain chapel, square-built, formerly stood, with a triangular grass plot in the front of it. This was built for the Rev. G. Collison, who had removed from Walthamstow, and was associated with the seminary above named. This was in 1800. But on Mr. Collison's appointment at the seminary his pulpit was taken by the Rev. Mr. Hughes, whose talent as a preacher gained him so much popularity that the chapel soon became far too small, and a large part of the congregation (seceding with Mr. Hughes,) built for him a much larger chapel, with minister's house and offices, now known as Trinity Chapel, Devonshire-road. At the back of the chapel in Well-street was formerly what was known as the "Well-street Chapel Free School," established in 1807, and endowed for the education of orphans and poor children, to be sixty in number and with the usual English reading, writing and arithmetic, to be trained in the religious principles as set forth in the Church of England in their Calvinistic sense, and with the Assembly's Catechism, and they were to attend the Well-street Chapel. A few years after, chapel, schools and surroundings were swept away, and the space has been occupied by private houses and shops. Well-street continued from this point has nothing remarkable about it. On the opposite side, between Eaton-place and the Black Boys public house, were some very old tenements sixty years ago, and the public-house itself is probably nearly, if not quite, a hundred years old. West-street, now Elsdale-street, carries us into Paradise Fields, and what were once the nursery grounds attached to the Loddiges gardens, oft-times blooming with roses set in the most verdant of velvety grass turf, and a large field surrounded by a quick-set hedge. So I first remember this pretty spot, now all streets and houses. A narrow turning just out of Elsdale-street, and still called Orchard-place, had some very old houses, or rather cottages in it, where the Board School now stands, and they are clearly marked in my 1745 map.[133]

Well-street then ran on through open fields to the corner of Berger's factory, where it terminates. The five-acre field on the right hand was known as "Butfields," and was bequeathed to the parish by Valentine Poole, of Old Ford, by will dated 23rd May, 1664, the rent thereof to be distributed by the churchwardens to the poor of Hackney for ever; it was a beautiful upland field, but has since been covered with houses, Valentine-road and Poole-road perpetuating the name of the donor. At the point where Kenton and Wick roads begin was in 1745 a pool of water, I should say a good-sized horse-pond, and this ushered the traveller into Water-lane, which I can assure my readers was no misnomer—somewhere about where Retreat-place begins, of course at the foot of that acclivity, is marked in my old map quite a small lake, evidently fed by the Hackney Brook. This piece of water was gone before my time, doubtless filled up when the roadway called Retreat-place was formed. Passing up it for a moment we find at the top of the hill on the left hand side, a neat range of alms-houses, viz., six dwelling houses, a chapel in the middle, forming one block in a row. These were erected and endowed by Samuel Robinson, Esq., in 1812, for eight widows of Independent ministers, and four of Baptist ministers, and a sum of £10 each per annum during his life and £13 subsequently. The tomb of the founder, who died 4th September, 1833, aged 83, and of his wife who died 4th August, 1836, aged 80, is in front of the chapel surrounded with a railing. With much forethought, Mr. Robinson secured and dedicated a plot of ground exactly opposite on the other side of the road, as an open space for his widows. It is a pleasure to record these alms-houses among the many charities, and not the least of them, with which our Hackney parish abounds.[134]

Coming back to Water-lane, we are confronted with the extensive and noble premises of Messrs. Lewis Berger and Sons. As the oak grows so has their business, and so have their premises extended. By the ready courtesy of the present acting manager, as well as owner of the business (a colour factor), Lewis Berger, Esq., I was offered every information. In 1850 I was a frequent (because professional) visitant at the factory, and the great changes by enlargement of every department during the last forty years astonished me. The exquisite colours therein compounded, were of themselves a wonder, and among other attractions was a sheet of water, formed in canal fashion and swarming with gold fish, which bred there freely, and was a sight worth seeing. Although the supply of water was not from the Hackney Brook, which ran under and around a part of the building, they were not by this means finished off, the constant entry of waste steam had proved equally pernicious, and the fish had all gone. Not so their stud of horses, prize-winners at every show wherein they put in an appearance, and as docile as they are beautiful, and seeming to form between horses, men, and masters, a thoroughly happy family. As Mr. Berger said, it costs no more to keep a good horse than a bad one; and allowing for the natural variance of temper and dispositions among the several parties above named, I am satisfied that the horses are not the worst used. My dear readers, who may own horses, ever remember that "the merciful man is merciful to his beast," and from long experience I boldly assert that no more worthy, faithful friend exists than the horse upon whose exertions so many of us depend for our living; and that nine times out of ten our horse is what we make him and how we use him. Mr. Berger informed me that their business was established in 1760 by his great-grandfather, Lewis Berger, who came over from Germany with a brother, and started the business at first at Shadwell under the title still used, and truthfully, "Lewis Berger and Sons." Thence they moved to Homerton, and the house in Shepherd's-lane was built for and inhabited by the resident partner. One clause in their original partnership deed was peculiar, "one partner was by no means to use abusive language towards the other partner."[135]

That Water lane was rightly called, I must inform my readers that the Hackney Brook having crossed the foot of Bridge-street, ran behind some small houses still standing, and thence skirted the lane where the Berger's wall now stands, ran in front of their foreman's cottage, opposite Retreat-place, where the path to the cottage door was by a bridge, and thence under and around the southern extremity of the factory. When it overflowed it was often across the road, and many times in days gone by has the overflow reached two-thirds across the roadway. Of course the great main sewer has taken its place, running about the same course, but too deep down to incommode us. The last point of somewhat antiquarian interest is the spot where stood the Woolpack Brewery, at one time belonging to a Mrs. Addison, and for many years to a Mr. Church. It was situated on the banks of the brook, which was here crossed by a bridge, built probably about 150 years ago, and was thoroughly repaired in 1821. It consisted of a centre pier and two arches, all of brick. A Mr. Randall, who had the brewery before 1800, used the brook water, then sweet and clear enough, to brew from. I do not know the date of its establishment, but should imagine from its position that it was by far the oldest brewery in our parish. The dwelling house occupied by Mrs. Addison, still stands. The extensive yard is now used for stores and stabling, over it runs the North London Railway by a high viaduct. In the year 1848, during its construction, it would appear that the scaffolding and centres having been struck too soon, the high archway came down with a crash killing instantly two men and two horses and injuring several others. I shall not easily forget the scene that presented itself, as being at once summoned to the accident, I was there almost before any of the debris had been removed, or the dead and injured extricated.[136]

CHAPTER XX.

(Papers, lviii., lix., lx.)

ELSDALE STREET, formerly West-street, Well-street, passes into what was called "Paradise Fields," a name which seems to be expunged from our modern street nomenclature, and justly so, for, as I remarked in my last paper, the road runs through fields no longer; it is now known as Chatham-Place, that is from the eastern end of Darnley and Devonshire-roads. I might note on our right the graceful and thoroughly ecclesiastical building, the present Unitarian chapel. The structure, erected for, and preached in by the late Rev. Robert Aspland, showed such symptoms of decay, that it was deemed advisable to pull it down, and the present building was reared on its site in the year 1858. It stands in a small burial ground still used for the families of the worshippers at the chapel. The eldest son of the late Robert Aspland, the Rev. R. Brook Aspland, entered on his ministry here soon afterwards. He was a school fellow of the late Lord Beaconsfield, at Mr. Potticary's school, Blackheath.[137]

A few yards further on are the Hackney Parochial Schools, built, as Mr. Harding informs me, on the site of four dwelling houses; the schools and playgrounds occupying a plot 80 yards square. Their origin was a bequest of Mrs. Margaret Audley, who, by her will, dated 18th November, 1616, gave £700 to the Skinners' Company to purchase lands, or otherwise to ensure a yearly sum of £35, to be paid to the Churchwardens of Hackney, of which £20 should be paid to a schoolmaster, and £15 towards the education of twelve boys, to be selected, and elected by the Vicar and Churchwardens, with the consent of twelve of the most substantial householders in the parish. It was intended that these boys should receive an education which should fit them for the learned professions, but this was abandoned half a century later. Before this bequest, the vestry had appointed a schoolmaster, who was to take no more than fourpence weekly for teaching a child of a parishioner grammar, writing, and accounts, and twopence a week for English grammar only. In 1714 the schools, then called the Parochial Charity Schools, were founded, and supported as they are now by voluntary subscriptions, donations, and legacies, the master still receiving £20 annually for the education of twelve boys. The present building was erected in 1811, and as a boys' and girls' school, accommodation for a master and mistress, and a centre hall. The children attend the Parish church. Men, who as boys received their only education there, have before now made their mark amongst us—parishioners of whom we have never felt ashamed. Pursuing our course, we have the Paragon on one side, with somewhat stylish-looking houses, some 80 or 100 years old, and Chatham-place itself, a row of houses aforetime occupied by some of our wealthier parishioners. Opposite, we have a magnificent Board school which one cannot survey without the keen feeling that at less cost, and therefore a less strain upon the overtaxed dweller in the Metropolis, an equally useful and substantial building might have been erected.[138]

Then crossing Morning-lane we entered the " Church well path," and so pass into the main road to Clapton. This portion was originally called " Bob's Hall-lane,"—opposite is Clapton-square, once known as " Clapton Field." In Clapton-square, I imagine, once lived that talented Jewess and authoress " Grace Aguilar," for I distinctly remember seeing that address at the foot of the preface of one of her charming tales. I am informed, however, by a kind lady friend, Miss Voss, that " Grace " lived at a house nearly opposite Well-street, also that a large family of Aguilars first resided at the corner of Clapton-passage, which was latterly a school kept by a Dr. Burke, and with these relatives Grace often stayed. They were Spanish Jews and very talented. " Sarah," one of the family, wrote *Home Influence*. Grace Aguilar's tales were, sixty years ago, as popular as Mrs. Wood's are now.[139]

The main road from the corner, where Urswick-road, formerly Upper Homerton, ends, and now known as the High-road, Clapton, was two hundred years ago called Hackney-lane, quite up to its embouchere at Stamford-hill. It was only here and there dwellings stood, and for the most part they were of the best. I would take my readers as far as the corner of Lea Bridge-road, where a toll-gate formerly stood. It is not so many years ago that on the right-hand side of the road, where modern houses, and hoardings with flaring bill postings now stand, were extensive grounds, laid out in good landscape gardening style, enclosed with iron railings, and with a carriage sweep leading up to a spacious building, still standing, but oh! how altered! A new street, Linscott-road, leads up to the central building. Here was the London Orphan Asylum, now moved to the neighbourhood of Watford. The entire plot, purchased in 1813 for £4,000, was eight acres, consisting of gardens and plantations, now built upon; but the structure still standing was a central building, used as a chapel, leading on either side by a pillared corridor to the boys' schools and dormitories on the north, and the girls' on the south. At the back was an infirmary and all the domestic offices. The head master (also the chaplain) had a house in the grounds. All the leading members of the Royal Family, and of the nobility of that date, were supporters and subscribers. The building itself cost £30,000. For the orphan children their removal into the country was better. I cannot commend the change for the neighbourhood. It is to be hoped that the gigantic movement—the Salvation Army, now occupying those premises—may in their turn promote the well-being of their fellow men.[140]

It would seem that this open space in our parish had been for some long while devoted to education—spiritual and temporal—for on this very spot once stood the celebrated Hackney School for young noblemen and gentlemen. It also was a large building. It was first held by a Mr. Benjamin Morland; a Mr. Henry Newcome married one of his daughters in 1714, and succeeded Mr. Morland. Henry Newcome's son, the Rev. Peter Newcome, was vicar of Hackney in 1703. Subsequently his grandson, Richard Newcome, held the school until 1803, when he was followed by the Rev. Dr. Heathcote. On the complete erection of the London Orphan Asylum, in 1823, this old building (a print of which is before me in my study as I write this) was entirely removed. The houses beyond the Asylum grounds and Laura-place next to them, have all been built within the last seventy years. On the left hand side of the main road, where two villas, recently erected, now stand, was an old house, cleared away for the villas—it was called Howard House.[141] Why, I know not, except it is possible that the great philanthropist's father might have lived in it when he first came to Clapton. (Howard's House we shall come to.) At the demolition of the dwelling a marvellously ugly old "gurgoyle" was found, connecting the roof guttering at one corner of the building. Goulton-road has been formed out of the gardens that formerly flourished in this part of the parish, even within the last thirty years. Passing along we see very far back, next to the Windsor Castle Tavern, a deeply interesting old building. It is marked up as the "Priory Works"; next to it, still far from the road, is another dwelling called the "Priory," doubtless as old, but it has been re-fronted. Right in front, and flush with the pathway, is a little house almost like a Noah's Ark. It bears the stamp of age also, and reminds one of the small house in Mare-street, which formerly stood in front of a similar building to the Priory, and said to have been Sir Walter Raleigh's house. My impression is that in the Priory and the adjacent house we have one large mansion, and that the small house at the front was the lodge of the same. Among the dwellers in Clapton in 1605 we find the Countess of Oxford, Edward de Vere (Earl of Oxford), a Sir Francis Barrington, and a Sir Edward Standlye. Here we may reasonably locate the residence of one of them.[142]

The house we next come to, which is also flush with the path, certainly dates from William and Mary. Having years ago visited it, I can give it a somewhat early date of erection. Maitland-place is modern, but still somewhat old to many of my readers; the gardens of the several houses must have at one time formed one large pleasaunce. Rocque's map gives tenements here and there, but none of any particular size after those just named. By favour of my friend, Dr. Rowland Smith, now occupying Maitland House, the residence at one time of the builder of Maitland-place, I was shown in his garden the stump of an old walnut tree fast going to decay. He told me there was an inscription just decipherable, which stated "this walnut tree was planted by John Howard in 1780, or thereabouts." The father of the philanthropist, John Howard, a London upholsterer, would seem to have become a parishioner somewhere about 1733, as he is fined £20 for not taking up the usual parochial offices on 26th January, 1733. His renowned son, who was born in Hackney in 1727, was then only six years old. He afterwards purchased and occupied a house built in Elizabethan style, on ground at the back of two large houses (one occupied by Charles Lucas, Esq.,) exactly opposite Laura-place, and five years before his death, which occurred at Cherson, in Eastern Europe, in 1720, he sold the house for about £3,000. In the garden of Maitland House, where the old stump stands, the wall—a very high one on the south side—would seem to have been the original boundary of certain premises; that on the north side, enclosing the garden, is equally high, but has evidently been rebuilt, but with old materials. It is strange that the only view we have of Howard's Clapton residence is a moonlight one. Is it to be typical of the blessing on a good man's work, "Thy sun shall not go down by day, nor thy moon by night?" Of the work of our fellow parishioner one might write volumes; the present conditions of our prisons both at home and abroad, prove that Howard lived and lived to some purpose. Let my readers visit St. Paul's Cathedral, search out his monument, note and study his epitaph, and if ever there was one who fulfilled our Lord's description of the man who sought out and found his neighbours, our Hackney man, John Howard, fulfilled that *rôle*, dying as he had lived in the relief of the prisoners.[143]

My readers must forgive me if any reminiscences of this portion of Clapton degenerate somewhat into gossip about those who were dwellers hereabouts in more recent days. The two large houses opposite Laura-place—one once occupied by Mr. Lewis Berger, and the other by the late Mr Thomas Lucas— were without doubt built on the estate sold by the philanthropist, John Howard, and the much older house adjoining, which it will be noted stands so far back from the present house line and roadway as to be almost out of sight. That house which I have visited frequently, is at least 120 years old, and by marking its distance from the road, and the like distance of the Priory mentioned in my last paper, it will be no stretch of imagination to regard these mansions as situate on the original house frontages of this part of Clapton—taking in a line of the old house of John Howard, as shown by moonlight—each house standing on its own grounds and a good distance from the main road, then known as Hackney-lane. The houses standing next, being semi-detached and alike in style and frontage, were occupied, the first by the late Rev. Thomas Hugo, M.A., the antiquarian, and subsequently rector of West Hackney, where he died. I might add he was an ardent admirer and collector of marvellous woodcuts in the natural history of the celebrated "Berwick" Brothers, who not only drew their own sketches, and notably their "vignettes," but carved the wooden blocks which committed them to print.[144]

The next house was occupied by a widow named Revil (one of my oldest friends) who lived to the age of one hundred. Her husband was an intimate friend of the late Rev. J. Wesley, the founder of Methodism. A singularly planted dwelling house comes next, its side to the pathway, to which it is flush, and standing in a garden within high walls, that forming its frontage. This house was probably an appendage to the next house, which, by its style of architecture and position, attracts general attention. It is now the Deaf and Dumb Asylum. The house was formerly occupied by the late Mr. Skinner Turner, and previous to that by a Mr. Bowman ; it was built in the reign of Queen Anne between 1710-12, and, it is said, by a manufacturer of crockeryware who made a large fortune by selling toilette services and the like. It was at this period that a noted Tory and high churchman, the Rev. Dr. Henry Sachereval, had very much come to the front as a political preacher, and was impeached and tried in Westminster Hall, for preaching two sermons,one at St. Paul's before the Lord Mayor on the 5th November, 1709, and the other at Derby, the sentiments, I should gather, being for a return to the Stuart Dynasty. Candid criticism, however, at the time, declares there was no eloquence in them, but he had the power of stringing telling sentences together, and thus readily exciting on over-excitable public. He was found guilty, his two sermons were burnt at the Royal Exchange by the common hangman, and he was suspended from preaching for three years. Still there was at that time a sufficiently strong party, both in the government and society, to uphold his popularity, and articles of general domestic use, on which Sacheverel's likeness was emblazoned, fetched a ready and extensive sale, and made the dealer's fortune. There is a pot of flowers on each of the large piers of the gate, corroborative of the builder's calling, and its old nick-name, scarcely fit for ears polite, confirms the fact. The house stands in its own grounds, and attached to it was a beautiful meadow, on the western side of Back-lane (now Clarence-road) which was bounded by the Hackney Downs. It was the popular resort of cricket clubs (not nearly so numerous as now), and the memento of such use is the title "Cricket-field-road," which runs diagonally across that part of the estate.[145]

Two very old houses come next, probably built about the same time. The first was for many years the abode of the late Mr. G. H. Gaviller, whose name and services were associated with many a good work, and whose memory, I am sure, will be dear to many a boy and girl brought up at that London Orphan Asylum. There is no further dwelling of special interest up to the corner of Clarence-road—once the Back-road or lane to Hackney. On the opposite side of the road, starting from Laura-place, there formerly stood a rather quaint—looking house in red brick, of rather low elevation, and known for years as Mrs. Slater's school. I should think it dated from George I. or II. The entry in front was by an open court, enclosed within iron railings, but the first and second stories of the house were built over it, so that it was thoroughly enclosed and paved with diamond-shaped white and black marble slabs. It had a good garden behind, and was accounted one of the highest style of ladies' schools. Mrs. Slater's brother, the Rev. Mr. Black, a former acquaintance, was a leading London archæologist, and was also minister at a small, but well-endowed, chapel near the Minories, for what were called the "Seventh day community"; that is they still adhered (as the Jews do) to the seventh day (Saturday) as the holy-day.[146]

Adjoining Mrs. Slater's and where some shops now stand was a house quite flush with the footpath, and with trees before it, but without one inch of land attached to and behind it. How such a monstrosity was erected often puzzled me. It was, however, for several years, the residence of Dr. Duesbury, of no mean repute. He was a bachelor, and I daresay, is still remembered by some of my older fellow-parishioners. Next to it, and standing very far back from the road and in part behind Dr. Duesbury's house, was a quaint old building, known as "Cromwell

House" Lodge. The pathway from the road to the entrance door was down an incline, and when you entered you had to take a lower step still. I should call the style debased Gothic, worked out in lath and plaster, but when it was built and why in such fashion, I never could learn, although I often inquired. It might have gone back to the days of Oliver Cromwell, but I fancy was quite innocent of any further connection with that great man or his family. A new road now runs through its grounds, and those of a large block, formerly coach-houses and stabling, for the adjoining houses. We then come to a few very well-built houses in somewhat various styles, only each having at one time good gardens. It was at the house called "The Lodge," or next door to it, "The Ivy Lodge," that years ago I used to spend an occasional most pleasant evening, under the roof of the late Mr. Stephen Olding, of the banking firm of Rogers, Olding & Co.[147]

Here I once was favoured by meeting the poet Rogers, and no doubt he was from time to time a visitor at his partner's. Mr. Olding's name was identified with many a good work in days gone by. Some peculiar-looking houses occupy the southern side of Clapton Pond, but that plot, like too many other spots in our once beautiful village, is showing the hand of the spoiler, and a good house, once the residence of members of the Masterman's (the city banker) family, seems to have come down to a wheelwright's. A good and respectable trade truly, and in these days of tram-lines on the public roads, more than ever necessary. At the back of Clapton Pond are a few old houses remaining. It has been said that in one of them, called the "Tower House," Major André, of American war-of-liberty memory, was born. He may have lived there a short while as a bachelor, but his place of birth is almost definitely fixed higher up the Clapton-road. The large house at the back of the pond, now a lady's school, was for many years the residence of Mr. Samuel Preston Child, chairman of the East London Waterworks Company. Of the pond itself, report says it was dug out and fashioned in the reign of James I. Is it to disappear in that of Queen Victoria? It were wiser not to express one's thoughts relative to Clapton Pond, its real owner, his past connection with Hackney, and his wealth derived therefrom, and how he might disburse a little of it for the benefit of this locality.[148]

The interesting and quaint looking old almshouses, known as Bishop Wood's, are the next buildings of note behind Clapton Pond. I have already referred to their builder and generous endower in my account of the Rev. Dr. Thomas Wood, Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, and chaplain to Kings Charles I. and II., in my notes on the parish church and its monuments. As I then stated, the good old man, Hackney born and bred, could not be severed from his native village, even by a bishopric. Here he lived, here he died, and left in these interesting old almshouses a memorial for all time. We would feel assured his anchor during life's voyage was cast within the veil. Here, at any rate, he has on earth laid as sure and good a foundation as any mortal man could effect. A few good houses stand between these lowly but comfortable dwellings, and the plot on which the bishop's mansion formerly stood.[149]

Twenty years ago Clapton House, with its beautiful grounds and wooded avenue at the back, extending half-way down to the River Lea, and extensive stabling on the northern side, were interesting mementoes of Clapton and its lordly parishioners in the olden time. This house was for some years the residence of Mr. James Powell, to which he moved on leaving Shore House, South Hackney. Subsequently it became the first home of St. John's Foundation School for the sons of poor clergy under the head mastership of the Rev. Mr. Hawkins. Here the school so flourished that for want of room, migration or enlargement was compulsory, and instead of extending their borders here in poor Clapton, the establishment was entirely removed to Leatherhead, still under the same admirable generalship, of the genial Rev. Mr. Hawkins, whose responsibilities, and it is hoped income, have been increased by his acceptance of the vicarage of St. Bride's, Fleet Street, London. One or two very good houses, bringing us to the corner of Lea Bridge-road, still stand—cut up into sections, fronted by shops, and forming a busy mart—where two quiet families, who kept their carriages, and lived in honourable retirement, were our neighbours some thirty years ago. Lea Bridge-road, as we now call it, is a comparatively modern roadway into Essex.[150]

If my readers will walk down the road to the end of the houses on the right hand side they will note a fence trending somewhat to the right, and having here and there fine grown timber (elm trees), at least 200 years old. These mark the hedge-row which formed the southern boundary of the original passage into Essex, being a carriage drive as far as the river, and then crossing the old mill's head, where the East London Water Company's pumping works (by a water mill) are now situated. This was the only road into Essex in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and carriages could only get as far as the river. The road was then called Mill Fields lane, and at this termination on the river bank was a once celebrated hostelry, now entirely swept away, "The Horse and Groom," a place dear to anglers in the days of Izaak Walton, and of well deserved renown, even in the days of our grandfathers, 1800-10. There were also extensive flour mills on this spot—and when I was a boy there was a great deal of talk about a very large fire which had entirely consumed the mills, of the date of which I am not certain, but I can remember scrutinizing, as well as admiring, a painting in oils of the scene by my old but not forgotten friend, the late William Dennis, of Church-street; and he used to tell us of the incident, of which he was a spectator. The present Lea Bridge-road was laid out about 1750, and a bridge for carriages over the river was then constructed, thus giving a good clear roadway through Clapton into Essex, and by which, subsequently, our several four horse coaches travelled from London to Walthamstow, Woodford, Epping, Cambridge, Swaftham, Brandon and Norwich. There was a special bridge toll as well as the ordinary tolls of the metropolitan roads. (Half-a-crown a week was a moderate allowance for tolls in bye-gone days.) This first bridge, apart from decay (for it was for the most part wood), became inadequate for the traffic over it, and the barge water-way under, and it was therefore taken down and the present iron bridge erected in its place in 1820. This must however be altered, and I believe arrangements are already made to that effect, namely, a widening of the roadway over it for tram lines and other traffic, and an alteration in the carrying girders beneath, which, for want of proper elevation above the water surface, render the passage of barges with high bulwarks, or much top lading, most difficult.[151]

Coming back to Clapton, it will be noticed that a row of small houses on the right hand side—north—are old enough to date with the formation of the road. I am sorry to figure again as a grumbler, but in the re-naming of dear old Pond-lane, with its sequestered nooks and ancient elms, taking us from the south-eastern corner of Clapton Pond to the marshes, and to what used to be a country walk, why could not our Hackney Board of Works have revived the former name of Lea Bridge-road (if Pond-lane was not good enough), and have called it Mill Fields "lane" instead of "road?" To whom is delegated the momenclature of our streets and roads? Would it not be worth while to consult some local antiquary on such action, which may pass into all time, so that the memories of the "old past" may merge into the future. Coming into Clapton once more, we used to be confronted by a substantial toll bar. I have seen a drawing of it somewhere. It had two gates, north and south—Hackney to Clapton, east to Lea Bridge. It was a pretty, well-devised structure. Where Kenninghall-road now runs stood a portion of the house and the extensive grounds of the late Mr. Frederick Huth, founder of the great mercantile firm—notably Spanish—of F. Huth & Co. Here he resided many years. His sons were my schoolfellows, and, although so far apart in station and in wealth, the schoolboy warmth still comes upon us—for we were chums—when we have occasionally met in these latter days. They lived in considerable style in Clapton sixty years ago, with their carriages, horses, and saddle ponies. The greater part of the house still stands, and is fronted by shops. A few smaller private houses then existing are still standing—mementoes of the good and quiet residential character of this part of Clapton.[152]

The White Hart, even recently still more modernized, has taken the place of an interesting old wayside inn, burnt down in, I think, 1832, or 1834, while I was a schoolboy. The incidents of so rare an occurrence as a big fire in our quiet parish are as vividly impressed on my memory as if it had been but yesterday, as in the early morning some of us boys visited the scene; looked at the old parish fire-engine which had done its best; the host and some of his people keeping watch over the little property saved (for there were no policemen then, or but few), and the many peculiar surroundings—these revived by witnessing recent fires, with all their modern appliances, smart engines and smarter men, call up a comparison which intensifies the memory of the past. All this part of Clapton belonged latterly to the Powell family, and next to the White Hart was a beautiful plot of ground known as the "Strawberry Garden," probably it was here our ancient friend Pepys so enjoyed that fruit, and has immortalised it in his journals. This plot was given to the Church Commissioners by the Rev. T. B. Powellin 1840 for St. James' Church, which, with St. Philip's, Dalston, was erected in a newly formed district (a vicarage in each locality) by taking also from the rector's stipend a certain amount towards the stipends of the vicars, to be severally appointed. The church was consecrated on the 14th October, 1841, the Rev. James Powell, an estimable clergyman, being the first vicar.

The church is brick-built in very uncommon style, and, while most substantial, cannot be called picturesque. Its interior is very plain and rather dark; there is some good modern stained-glass in the windows, the reredos was originally very bald, but from time to time has been improved by further embellishments. The pulpit is a beautiful specimen of carved stonework, but very high in position because of the galleries. The bareness of the brickwork has been somewhat relieved by ivy, introduced a few years back. The Rev H. D. Pearson is the present vicar. Coming back, we notice shops fronting probably the oldest houses in Clapton, and where the beautiful gothic stone Wesleyan Chapel now stands, was formerly a fine mansion, not particularly old, but very extensive, the dwelling for many years of two old maiden ladies, the Misses Powell. The grounds were very extensive, and went back to what is now called Nightingale-road, which took the place of a somewhat meandering pathway leading from Hackney Downs, where the railway Downs' tunnel begins, and between the railway and the Downs Hotel, having a high hedge and bank on either side, and came out at the "World's End," now Brooke-road, skirting the back of the Brooke House grounds, in which may still be seen some of the old elm trees which overshadowed the pathway along. It was known as the "Lovers' Walk." Here the cuckoo and the nightingale might often be heard, and the present Nightingale-road, which follows the line of the old path except at the Downs end, is thus appropriately named. At the death of our old parishioners the house was pulled down, and now the chapel and some awkwardly-placed houses and shops at the opening of Clarence-road have taken its place. The two plots in the centre of the high road opposite the chapel, and in a line with the pond, had formerly the inverted U shaped pipes, belonging to the East London Waterworks. May these plots be preserved as open spaces? As Shrubberies they would adorn a spot which is fast losing its picturesqueness.[153]

CHAPTER XXI.

(Papers LXI., LXII., LXIII.)

LET me take my readers from my last stopping place the Wesleyan Chapel, opposite Clapton Pond, and return towards Mare-street, Hackney, through the Back-lane, now glorying in the more stylish appellation of Clarence-road, not, I imagine, so named from the late lamented Duke of Clarence, but from what was, up till a few years back, the only public-house in that road, and having that sign. With visions of the past in my mind's eye, I would endeavour to bring to the notice of my readers the old scene. Downs-road was not then in existence; gardens and fields occupied the entire area from the Clapton end of the Back-lane to Clarence-place. On our right was a beautiful field, or, I think two fields, level as a bowling green, with here and there a shed for agricultural purposes, and some splendid timber—I believe elm trees. There was also a row of the same along what is now Queen's Down-road, and, as I have before named, while this land was in the possession of Mr. Skinner Turner no enterprising builder could touch it, and during the latter part of that good man's life it was in constant requisition as a cricket field, this fact being memorialised by the name, "Cricketfield-road," given to the road which now divides that former "parallelogram" into two unequal triangles. I cannot but think that in these days of County Councils and open spaces, our Downs, pleasant and extensive as they are, would have had those fields added to them.

On the left hand side, going towards Hackney, we had the brick garden walls, as we still note them, the terminals of the gardens belonging to the houses in Lower Clapton, and a fine large piece of land happily still open, behind Maitland-place, now the happy hunting ground of some lawn tennis players. Back-lane was a clear thoroughfare for pedestrians, horses and carriages, but these last were confronted with a row of heavy, stumpy wooden posts across the roadway, between which no carriage could attempt to pass: but if we cannot go directly through an obstruction, figurative or real, we may circumvent the one and go round the other, and this latter was the alternative in Back-lane. A blind lane had (perhaps from all time) existed at the beginning of what is now known as Downs Park-road, and was carried as far as where the Three Sisters' Tavern now stands, and the beautifully built Presbyterian Chapel—a locality of which I happen to have an exceedingly well-defined and painful recollection, not through a public house, for all was open country then, but the ghost of a dead tree, just at the south-east corner of the Downs, up which one bright, breezy Ash Wednesday morning I essayed to climb with other schoolfellows, and came down, to the terror of myself and the far more serious damage to my clothes. I was but young then, and must confess that the removal of that dead tree, in the first stage of those improvements, which have now so thoroughly altered the aspect of that locality, was an unspeakable comfort to me. There was a stile at that spot, and the walk across the Downs, as we yet have it, to West Hackney. At that time the land was under plough, the young wheat was shooting forth its first green blades, and larks were soaring and singing in mid air. There was a footpath due west to Shacklewell, and in the bank, somewhere opposite where the Grocers' Company's School now stands, was a beautiful and constantly flowing spring of water. I have heard it said that it never failed in the longest drought.[154]

The Lovers' Walk, or "Love-lane," for either name was given, started from that weird dead tree, and formed the eastern boundary of Hackney Downs — now Queen's Down-road. Extensive market gardener's grounds were on the north, while the Hackney Brook (then in very deed a purling stream) flowed along the whole length of the western border—somewhat in the line of the present Enfield branch of the Great Eastern Railway—and was here and there crossed by ancient footpaths, still existing—one from the southern end of Rectory-road, another across the middle of Amhurst-road—and thus entering on to the Downs by plank bridges. There is an interesting water-colour picture in the Tyssen Library of a boy standing on one of these bridges—not a bad representation, in figure and costume, of the writer at the time of the trouble aforesaid, and it does certainly bring before one the former rusticity of our old village. My readers may be here reminded that the Downs, as with other common lands in the parish, was Lammas Land, and as a consequence, became the rightful property of the commoners of the parish for a certain number of months every year, beginning on the 1st of August. Passing on towards Hackney there were no houses in my earliest days, and a plot of land opposite the Duke of Clarence Tavern, and skirting the grounds of the Hackney Church of England School, was devoted to pleasure gardens—an appendage of the tavern. Where Pembury-road now runs, were open grounds, interspersed with gravel pits and small bits of ponds, the abode of frogs and efts, which met with but scant mercy at our schoolboys' merciless hands. When the Clarence Villas were built the gardens were done away, but I would ask my readers to note the ancient and tall elm trees in the school playground, as my belief is they are the relics of a former footpath fence, it may be but the off-shoots of such former hedge-row, but clearly marking a way of which I shall write anon.[155]

I think it was in the year 1830 that the Hackney Church of England School was established and built as we now see it. My own family and connections were very much identified with it. It was opened by the Bishop of London of that day, whose portrait (brought from the Bishop's Palace at Fulham, where it narrowly escaped destruction from a fire which occurred there some years ago) now adorns its walls. The Rev. Archdeacon Watson, the Rev. H. H. Norris, and the leading gentry of the village were present at a service, which was so admirably and efficiently conducted as to be tantamount to a consecration. On the heads of the two boys, whose names were first entered on the list of scholars, the Bishop laid his hands, and the writer happened to be one of the favoured two. The school soon mustered some 120 boys. The leading masters—clergymen and members of the Universities—were first the Revs. E. Churton, Dunningham, and Dickens; the two latter were allowed to have boarders. Mr. Churton subsequently married one of Archdeacon Watson's daughters, retired on a good preferment, and died as an Archdeacon in the north of England. The names of the earlier pupils are scarcely subjects for archæological record, but it is but fair to my old school to record the fact that among those who received their first classical education there were men who reached high positions in the State, in the Church, at our Universities, in our Army and Navy, in the legal and medical professions, as members of the Royal Academy, holding high positions in commercial life, and many in the pursuit of scientific and geographical knowledge, amongst the most famous travellers in foreign lands. To mention names here would be invidious, but as three masters' names have already been given I must add to them our old French master, Mons. Cellier, one of the best of men, who has passed away, and also too soon, his highly-talented son, the writer of "Dorothy," of theatrical renown. At the Clarence Tavern, some years ago, when deepening the cellarage, they came upon an old statue. It was evidently a river god—perhaps a Neptune—and must at one time have stood by a lake or a fountain in a pleasaunce in the immediate neighbourhood. It was not remembered to have been at any time in the "pleasure gardens" I have just named, and in fact, its discovery so deep in the earth contradicts that surmise; one can only imagine that it was formerly an ornament in the baronial grounds, perhaps of the Priory, or other stately and aristocratic mansion, which once stood in this immediate neighbourhood.[156]

Before I close this paper and this sketch of Lower Clapton, I must go back into the far past, and without seeking to emulate that precocious young "character" in Rev. John Home's dramatic sketch, "Norval," whose father fed his flocks upon the Grampian Hills, while he himself "had heard of battles, and had longed to follow to the field some warlike lord," I would just refer to an ancient conflict in our immediate neighbourhood, as given by the John Thomas, of Well-street, afore-quoted. It would seem from ancient chroniclers that a rivalry—meaning war to the knife—existed in the year 527 between Octa, grandson of Hengist, King of Kent, and Erchenwin, who had founded the kingdom of Essex, and had by force of arms, taken London (aforetime in the kingdom of Kent) to be the capital of his new kingdom of Essex—" Lindin Byrig" as London, formerly "Troynovant," was at this date called. Octa mustered his forces, consisting of 15,000 men, in galleys (for they were of the old warlike seafaring Danes) on the Medway at Rochester; after haranguing them, and ensuring their fealty and zeal in his cause, they sailed down the Medway, and up the Thames, until they came to Woolwich, where somewhere about the present North Woolwich Ferry they cast anchor.

Here, after further counsel, they lifted anchors, and made for the mouth of the River Lea (then called the Ligan), passed up and through the lower Ford, near Temple Mills, and thence to the upper Ford, just below where Lea Bridge now stands, and anchored in the then widely-spreading waters of the Lea, which formed a perfect lake, and so known as the "Lake Locktuna," overlooking what is now Low Leyton. Here they disembarked on the Middlesex shore—our present South Mill Field, and formed in order under the three commanders, Osric, Hermonric and Edusa. From this point it was Octa's intention to make for what is now Bethnal Green, Mile End, and Whitechapel, and attack London by Baliness Gate (Billingsgate) and Ealdgate (Aldgate). Erchenwin and his son Sledda, had had early intimation of these hostile movements, and took prompt measures accordingly. He marshalled his forces—dwellers in London—and under commanders Cenrad and Anfrid came out of the city by way of the north gate—now Bishopsgate—and the Ermin-street (Kingsland) until he reached a Roman trackway passing due east (no doubt our present Clapton-passage, passing by the playground just named westward to Shacklewell Green, by the Crossway, and Kingsland, and eastward along what is now Powerscroft-road) and massing his troops on the high land immediately overlooking the North and South Mill Fields, and the Kentish fleet on the Lake Locktuna. Here a desperate battle was fought—a life and death struggle—scarcely any quarter given. In it Erchenwin proved victorious. Octa and the remains of his discomfited followers rushed to their galleys, made the best way they could down the Lea, and the Thames, and the East Saxons secured their new capital. So ended the battle of Clapton. How little do we, as we watch with interest the rivalry of cricket, tennis and football clubs, imagine that on that very soil, armies were posted in real battle array, and that those marshes have been stained with the blood of thousands in real warfare—*sic transit gloria mundi.*[157]

Memory goes back some sixty-five years, as standing by the toll house and gates at the top of Lea Bridge-road, one looked northwards into Upper Clapton. On the right hand side still stand some old houses, which were then overshadowed by beautiful elm trees—somewhat contracting the roadway and path, I admit, but the carriages, or rather public conveyances, were few and far between, and pedestrians none too many, so that the umbrageous high-road was sufficient for all purposes, and as Pepys would have added, mighty fine to behold. Sufficient just remains to show what once there was.

When we reach Beecholme-road, we miss on its very opening, a good old mansion, of which it was the site, the ground attached consisting of all the present road, houses, and their gardens. The last occupier was the Rev. Mr. Green, who kept a most flourishing gentleman's school. A former occupier, if not actual owner, was Anthony André, whose name appears on the minutes of the Select Vestry on 8th April, 1765, and he in 1766 left the sum of £50, the interest of which was to be given to the poor of Hackney. It is said that he lived in a house at the back of Clapton Pond, but from what I can gather this far more important dwelling was the more likely to have been Mr. André's residence, and that here also his talented but unfortunate son, Major John André was born about 1751.[158]

The next, Prout's-road, also marks the site of another old residence, now covered with shops, and at the back artisans' dwellings, and then we come to the "King's Head," doubtless the oldest public house in Upper Clapton. Opposite to it the third milestone from Shoreditch Church used to stand. Whether ancient or not, it has disappeared; wherefore the former unarchæological vestrymen may explain. It is singular that the two-mile stone was in Church-street, Hackney, close to the "King's Head" there. (Query: Had the signs any special relations to the mile stones?) Then we come to another good old house, now a veterinary surgeon's, but a good type of those which have been pulled down; and the tram yards close the right hand side of the road thus far.

From Kenninghall-road we have, on the left hand, a row of private houses some hundred and twenty years old; perhaps built some few years before that, yet their character is unaltered. They stand on the Brooke House estate, and with some villa residences in Kenninghall-road, form part of the extensive private lunatic asylum which has now been owned and carried on by the Munro family for one hundred and thirteen years. In fact, five generations, all medical men, have been the proprietors in serial course, and the present Mr. Munro, although a solicitor, stands in that position, having for his talented and genial partner a thoroughly practical medical man—who is resident—my good friend Dr. Adams. Under his guidance I have seen much that is truly interesting in Brooke House, now by far the oldest (and perhaps the only) surviving baronial mansion in our parish, and I make no apology for giving my readers the valuable information I have there obtained.

The earliest building on this spot (the foundations as seen in a capacious wine cellar still existing), was in 1409, when Henry IV., son of John of Gaunt, and first of the Lancastrian family, was king; and it was first known as the dower-house of the Queens of England, and also called the King's House, as being the manor house of the manor of King's Hold. No doubt the estate formerly belonged to the Knights Templars, and after their dissolution passed into the hands of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. One hundred years after, Henry VIII., on their dissolution, gave the estate to the Earl of Northumberland. It was the Earl who, with Sir Walter Walsh, arrested Cardinal Wolsey at Caw-wood. This same Earl formed an attachment for Anne Boleyn, which, however (not to cross the desires of that uxorious monarch), was set aside, only to be revived again, when the King got tired of her, and wanted some excuse for a divorce. The Earl, however, denied any pre-contract in a letter still extant, dated from his house on Newington Green, May 13th, 1537. He, however, died at Brooke House on 29th June, 1537, only six weeks after his letter.

The house again reverted to the "Crown," and was subsequently granted by Edward VI. to William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, in 1547, and is described at this date as having a great broad ditch on the back side. Wherever it was, there are no traces of such excavation now.

From Lord Pembroke it was bought by Lord Hunsdon, who, somewhere between 1560 and 1583, must have almost rebuilt and remodelled several of the internal parts of the building. Two stones, one on either side of the entrance steps, have the date of 1573 upon them. They are of a blueish grit. Lord Hunsdon conveyed it in 1583 to Sir Rowland Hayward. In 1605, by our parish records, we find it in possession of the Countess of Oxford, and she made over the house to Sir Fulk Greville, Lord Brooke, from whom, I presume, it acquired its present name. This nobleman, at the age of 74, was murdered at his other residence, Brooke House, Holborn, by an old servant, Ralph Hayward, who, immediately after committed suicide. This was in 1628. He was succeeded by his nephew, who was accidentally killed by a stray shot entering his bedroom window at the siege of Lichfield. The Manor was sold by Lord Brooke in 1700 to the Tyssen family, but he retained the mansion, and in 1800 it became the property of the Earl of Warwick, who still holds it.

The mansion was built about 1409, and much rebuilt in 1560 by Lord Hunsdon. It was refronted out of all taste, style, and proportion to the original building, as we now see it, about 120 years ago. I was shown an interesting drawing made in 1642, which is vastly different from the engraving in Dr. Robinson's history. One thing is evident, that the high road level was much lower than that of the present day. It had a remarkably tall narrow archway as its chief entrance, just at the angle where the cottage, as it is called, on the south side comes flush to the pathway, with a door in the wall, and the present front of the house. There was, also, a staircase turret on the south side of it, the lower portion of which is still standing. A breach in the house front at this point would bring one to a beautiful piece of marble pavement in black and white—diamond-shaped. This is the original floor of the entrance hall.

The present entrance is carried up several steps to a square internal hall, with square well staircase, all of the date of the present frontage. You then pass on into a corridor running the width of the frontage of the mansion, and by several steps descend to the marble hall—the old entrance. From this passes upwards a noble oak staircase, varying from six to nine feet in width, and certainly of the date of Lord

Hunsdon. Passing out to the left you are in the cottage of about the same date, with latticed and bay windows, looking out upon an enclosed garden. This was, doubtless, the original ground level. Passing up the turret staircase you enter a room with rather low ceiling, 24 by 18 feet, in this was originally a handsome marble bath, half sunk in the floor, 18 by 12 feet, and six feet deep (this has been some time removed). On the other side of the narrow staircase is fixed a pump, evidently for the supply of the bath, which will still yield water. Returning to the ground floor is a long and elegant drawing room, one half of the ceiling being in its original beautifully-pannelled state. Over this we pass along a corridor and enter two bedrooms—these evidently formed one large apartment—with an ark-shaped roof, supported by grained, light, oaken-ribbed beams, and which extend (although buried in brickwork) over the corridor, which, formerly, was part of the chamber; and this was, no doubt, the chapel.

We then come to a long corridor or covered gallery—this once formed, with the ten apartments it runs along, one spacious hall—the ceiling beautifully worked in panels with the shields and crests of Lord and Lady Hunsdon. Looking towards the front of the house is a quadrangle, thus enclosed by covered galleries. The open space is a garden, beautifully laid out with carpet bedding at this moment in glorious colouring. Entering the apartments, ten in number, we find each with a fire-place set in the west wall, and, as seen from the garden, these ten chimneys, fixed without, give a singular appearance to the west or garden front. The grounds are very park-like, and kept in splendid order. The covered galleries, by their return to the front of the house midway, form a second quadrangle, on the northern side of which is by far the most ancient part of the building—perhaps, the original structure, now devoted to culinary purposes and the attendants' dormitories. The style of building is in good keeping with the rest, and gives an excellent idea of the mansions of our nobility when Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth were our monarchs. There is a singular inventory, quoted at length by Dr. Robinson, taken in the reign of James I. It certainly shows that the house was not nearly so well furnished as it is now, and John Evelyn, who visited it on 8th May, 1654, states that "he went to see Lady Brooke's Garden, which was one of the neatest and most celebrated in England," but he gives but a poor character of the internal fittings of the house itself: our friend, Pepys, also came, and he was so delighted with the orange trees that he stole an orange.

But another visitant dwelt for a time within these walls and walked about these beautiful grounds. The Lady Margaret Lennox, *neé* Douglas, daughter of Queen Margaret Tudor and the Earl of Angus, and a god-child of Cardinal Wolsey, the mother of Lord Darnley, and grandmother of our James I. How she came here from Barber's Barn, Mare-street, I know not, but as this dower house of the Queens of England was vested in Queen Elizabeth she may have brought her here. But here comes another tale—painful enough, if true. The questionable Earl of Leicester came to Hackney to dine with her. There was considerable private talk between them, not known to the outside world. After dinner he left, and soon after Lady Lennox became very ill, waxing worse and worse. This was on the 7th March, 1577, and she died on the 9th March, never having rallied. She was buried in old Hackney Church, and James I., after his accession, removed her body, and his mother's also, to Westminster Abbey, where each lies under marble altar-tombs. The outbuildings, and the dwellings with shops, leading on to Brooke-road, are also ancient, and were all either farm buildings or the residences of followers of the noble dwellers at the mansion. Dr. Adams told me that in one part of the oldest buildings the stains of smoke in the open dormer roof still mark the fact that some parts of the building were constructed before chimneys were much in vogue.

Before I quit the neighbourhood of Brooke House, it is but fair that I should refer to what other writers on our parish have said of this, or of like mansions, once existing in goodly numbers in Hackney, and I note that Dr. Robinson is disposed to point out this very house as the probable residence of Edward Lord Vaux of Harrowden, who was an inhabitant of Hackney in 1592. There may have been some queer holes and corners in Brooke House, but to my own careful observation, there appear to be no evidences of such hiding places, as were in that period in use by the Jesuit priests, and other nefarious plotters, who had most certainly brought upon themselves such damnatory laws, and punitive visitations, as would scarcely be tolerated in these more liberal times, but which appeared to be the due reward for the fearful persecutions of Queen Mary's reign, and the still more hideous attempt at wholesale slaughter of the most treacherous kind, in the days of our James I., only two years after his accession to the English throne—I allude to the "gunpowder plot."[160]

Lord Vaux was certainly for a time a Hackney man, and a man of the hottest bigotry ; considering, as some plotters of the dynamite type are disposed to do in these more enlightened days, "that the end sanctifies the means." The probability is that he lived either in that former most aristocratic hamlet, Homerton, or possibly in the house before referred to, and still standing, "the Priory," Lower Clapton. Wherever he lived, as he was a noteworthy personage of a bye-gone age, I must make brief allusion to him, his connections, and doings. One James Roberts, of the Barbican, Moorfields, who published a book against the Romanists in 1603, speaks of him frequently in that work, and of his house at Hackney. He was a grandson of the Lord Vaux who was the the son of Thomas Vaux, the poet. He was so much suspected of nefarious practices in favour of the Jesuits, that he was for awhile committed to the King's Bench. He however outlived the direful schemes of the plotters, and the terrors of the law which they experienced, not dying till 1661. The conception of the Gunpowder Plot was said by the writers of that time to be partly due to Romanists of Spanish or Italian blood, who were brought over from the continent, and with English Jesuits, already filled with bitter hatred against the Protestant Dynasty (fully established by the accession of James the First), devised and nearly completed their diabolical scheme. Hence the necessity for the concealment of the leading conspirators, and without doubt it was Lord Vaux, and in his house at Hackney, that they found a hiding place and home. Yet as often happens that a man's worst foes may be those of his own household, there still exists a strong impression that the letter written to Lord Monteagle at his house in Hoxton, on Saturday evening, 26th October, 1605 (in a female's hand-writing) disclosing the plot, was written by Mrs. Anne Vaux—Lord Vaux's aunt—although others of that day ascribed its authorship to Lady Habington, and this letter was written in Hackney. However, our

Brooke House of Upper Clapton, I firmly believe, was neither the residence of Lord Vaux, nor the hiding place of Jesuits.[161]

At the end of the shops forming the boundary of the Brooke House estate on the north, is the Brooke-road. This was formerly a cart-way to the yard and farm premises of the mansion and was known as the "The World's End." The road was contracted to a foot-path joining on the left "Lovers' Walk," now Nightingale-road, and otherwise pursuing a delightful country footpath-walk west, and by north, between hedges, and fields, crossing a branch of the Hackney Brook by a plank bridge, until it reached the open space still known (and now happily secured for ever) as Stoke Newington Common. Continuing our course up Clapton there were three houses, small, and perhaps a hundred years old, which have recently been converted into shops ; then a house, still standing, having at one time a large garden, and occupied by a Mr. Slark ; then a hedge-row bounding a large field, and where the railway cutting at Clapton station runs, some rather small, but very old tenements, I should imagine at least 200 years old. The two houses known as Arbutus-place, (where the arbutus could grow some fifty years back, but no longer), have the date of their erection pretty well certified by the not infrequent custom of marking the same on the leaden water cistern, which in this case is 1774. There is a tradition handed down by an old gardener—long since dead—who was for years in the (at one time beautiful and extensive) garden at No. 1, that a frequent visitor to the house was "Constance Kent," of unhappy memory ; the cause of the death of an infant brother, surrounded with mystery, but an intensely exciting incident of a former generation. The poor girl was a near relation of the then occupant of the house. Next to these houses was another field, divided by a quickset hedge from the road, and the large house (still standing) known as the Ferns, and a smaller but as old a building, and the stationer's shop and post office, brought us to another road of ancient date. The preceding description refers only to forty years ago.[162]

Opposite the World's End, where the tram company's stone yard now is, was a well-built family house with its large garden, known as the "Lawn," a grass plot then giving it this title was at the back of the house, with a fine cedar tree in the centre. Lee-place, the best built houses in Clapton, and with very good gardens, must be at least sixty years old. Erected by a Mr. Lee, who must have found the equivalent of a "gold mine" in the land skirting the North Mill Field immediately behind, from the quality of the clay therefrom extracted; and in that clay have been found bones of animals of a distinctly antediluvian world, who must have roamed those plains thousands of years ago, to wit, the woolly-haired rhinoceros, and the elephant. On one occasion, summoned by the brick earth diggers, I went before some semi-fossil remains were disturbed, and there (as one sees the drowned carcase of a dog on the banks of a river or pond) were the remains of an animal, a woolly-haired rhinoceros (as the late Professor Sir Richard Owen, pronounced the bones to be) which had been washed up by some inundation; the waters had receded and left it lying on its side (the marks in the clay were discernible), but time or further floods, or some devouring animal, had made away with a larger portion of the body of this early Clapton denizen.[163]

Passing northwards, the larger houses we see must have been built about 1800, scarcely much earlier. Probably the small house behind Snewin Brothers' shop is of much more ancient type; the internal arrangements, size and shape of the rooms, &c., make it a rather peculiar building, still in quality (I feel ashamed to confess) far superior to the buildings of that size of our modern builders. Where the Clapton railway station now stands, and what is now Southwold-road, stood a very pretty house, rather back from the road; it was known as the Grange, but it, with its beautiful and prolific garden, has fallen a sacrifice to the exigencies of the times. A plot in the centre of which is the Crooked Billet Tavern, and on either side shops, have been in Clapton for eighty years; and we then come to what was originally a fine estate, as far as I can gather, belonging to the "Mount," Upper Clapton. It was from time to time parcelled out, and other houses built upon it. The two houses next to the shops have had their noteworthy tenants. In one dwelt the late Mr. Rotherham, the linen draper of Shoreditch, whose will was proved under £400,000. Another large plot was purchased by the late Mr. Hancock, on which his well-built residence was erected in 1852.[164]

It would be difficult to fix, in the absence of documentary evidence, the date of the house known as the "Mount"; standing back from the road, and of semi-castle-like form, it has a very striking appearance, and is no mean building in its general structure. For over sixty years—say seventy years ago—it belonged to the Castellaine family—of French extraction, as their name implies, but so long domiciled amongst us, that their family vault is in our Hackney Churchyard. I am informed that they are a Corsican family and related to Napoleon Bonaparte, and that the late Emperor, before his elevation to the throne, from time to time visited the Misses Castellaine. Their father held some important diplomatic post, and it has been rumoured that members of the family were victims of the Robespierrean revolution.

The house adjoining, the garden of which forms the corner of Mount Pleasant-lane, was occupied for years by a most worthy family, and we who still remain, can only regret that so many of our good old neighbours have left "for fields and pastures new." The road opposite, now called Northwold-road seems to have had sundry other designations. I presume the London County Council will compel it to stick to this last title. In the map of the parish survey of 1745 it is called Dow's-lane; when I was a child it was known as Keate's-lane, and then it was explained that this last name was that of the principal farmer who cultivated the open land around and about Stoke Newington Common, so perhaps Dow was Keate's predecessor. Subsequently it was named Brook-road, because it crossed the Hackney Brook as it passed the Common, and when "Brooke" road, from its position was most appropriately so called, this last name Northwold was given it. It is a winding country lane. The many smaller houses are about 70 or 80 years old. Nearer the Common are a few more pretentious, which are certainly much older, and in the neighbourhood of the Common itself were two or three handsome villa residences of good size and of the older type, standing in capacious grounds to match. All these have disappeared to make room for terraces and new roads. Only forty years ago the cuckoo and the nightingale were annual visitants to the wooded upland, now covered by Alkham, Osbaldeston, and other roads running upwards to Cazenove-road. In closing this paper I ought to inform my readers that amongst those who were formerly dwellers in the part of Upper Clapton I have just traversed were the late Mr. Robert

Hanbury, one of the leading partners in Truman, Hanbury & Co., brewers, and Mr. John Isaac Hensley, a former chairman of the Stock Exchange. Their houses, but which I cannot designate, are still standing.[165]

CHAPTER XXII.

(PAPERS, LXIV., LXV., LXVI.)

I HAVE before referred to the apparent accuracy of Rocque's map of 1745, and have just traced the course of "Hackney-lane," *i.e.*, High-road, Upper Clapton, from Northfield-road[*] to Stamford Hill Gate. I find nothing but open fields till we come to a spot midway between Springfield and Spring-hill, where there seems to be a large house, quite solitary, on the right-hand side. I do not know the age of Mr. Bros' house, but it may, perhaps, be it. Exactly opposite is evidently a large house which I knew well—latterly occupied by a Mr. Johnson (Pinchin and Johnson), and before him by the grandfather of the present Mr. Anderson Crichett, the oculist. The house was of red brick—in Queen Anne's style—stood very far back from the road, and had a beautiful avenue of chestnut trees before it. No other building is marked down, and I see Clapton Common is in that map called "Broad" Common. The houses on the left-hand side from Northfield-road[*] appear to be the oldest at that spot, and the title "Belle Vue" terrace, borne by some of them, would seem to imply "a beautiful view," which doubtless there was before the houses on the right-hand side, from Mount Pleasant-lane northwards, were built. The view from thence through those fine old elm trees, happily still standing, must have been very fine, over marsh and river, wood and hills, no houses, or, at most, one here and there in the far distance, just dotting the landscape.[166]

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[*] **(Should be Northwold Road. Ed.)**

It has been said that all this part of Upper Clapton is, as the crow flies, but thirty miles from the sea, or, at any rate, its deeper inlets, without any town intervening; also that on the Downs, after a persistent east wind, the ozone smell of the pure sea breeze is distinctly traceable. On Clapton Common I have noticed it myself in the early morning, before factories and other chimneys belch forth their smoke. Rossington-street, formerly Wood-street, is not marked in Rocque's map at all, so it must be a comparatively modern thoroughfare. Query: Was it called Wood-street because of the many trees—almost constituting a wood—in the neighbourhood of Stoke Newington Common, to which it leads? Winslade-road has been formed in my time. I remember a stack fire of some importance, where the road now runs, soon after I came to Clapton. I should give to several of the older houses an age dating from 1790 to 1810. To those of my readers who delight to note the old landmarks, I would refer them to a good double-fronted house opposite the Messrs. Low's nursery grounds, and for many years the residence of a Mr. John Low (no relation to his opposite neighbour). The house is called "Elm Villa," and in front of it is a large elm tree of at least 200 years' growth. In days gone by it was a very marked object, because its lower branches, which were very long and spreading, actually rested upon the grass plot where it grew. The answer my old friend Mr. Low gave me was this: "The road all the way up to the common," said he, "when I was a child, passed through meadow land—fields on either side. These were fenced off from the road by a hedge and ditch. The elm tree grew in the hedge, and when the meadow lands were raised and levelled, and the ditch filled, the elm tree, as you now see it, was buried so far."

On the opposite side, Messrs. Low's nursery still affording us an open space, would give my readers an idea of what Hackney-lane was 150 years ago. Warwick-road seems also to have been a somewhat modern creation—it is not marked in the 1745 map, unless I have mistaken it for Springfield—but on careful study of the map I am disposed to give the following explanation. The upper part of Warwick-road was non-existent. To reach its lower end, and the two or three houses then there, looking down upon High Hill Ferry, then called "Morris' Ferry," access was by Springfield-road, and thence through what is now known as Warwick-avenue—at any rate Springfield joined, at its ending, "Mount Pleasant-lane" which, although marked in Rocque's map, has no name given it—yet here was evidently a fine old mansion, standing in its own grounds, and where, subsequently, in a house built out of its *debris*, a Mr. William Ballance formerly lived, and a Dr. Lane—a retired medical man, lived and died. Although no allusion is made to this part of our parish in any work I have consulted, I have heard on good authority that Sir Christopher Wren, the builder of St. Paul's and the renovator of burnt London, lived here for some time; that a portion of his old garden wall is still to be seen skirting the lane leading to Messrs. Connell's dye works; and that Warwick-road, before it was made into a road and the houses therein erected as now, was called Wren's Park.[167]

In the earlier papers of these Glimpses I have referred to the Roman occupation, and that from the sepulchral remains found in Mr. Bros' field, some important Roman villa must have stood there. Let me ask my readers to go with me for a moment to the far past—before the peoples and powers that caused "the battle of Clapton" had arrived here—say *from* 60 *to* 70 *years only after Christ.* The Romans by their brutality to our Queen Boadicea and her daughters, had made her their deadliest enemy, and no punishment which she could bring to bear upon their army and their settlements was accounted too severe. Her camp had been formed in Epping Forest—its circumvallations, banks and trenches still remain—bearing witness to her energy and skill. Here, then, along Mount Pleasant-lane, where St. Matthew's Church "lifts its spire to heaven"—here, without doubt, the Roman sentry, "walked his lonely round," for from this hill ridge, no doubt higher than it is now, a most commanding view of the subjacent country could be obtained, and the signals of the Roman scouts in the marsh and lowlands carefully noted. Portions of our parish in this corner are, and have been, most picturesque, but, alas! the enterprising builder is rapidly defacing them, and we cannot help it. Returning to the common, we are confronted with what I suppose may be considered the second chapel-of-ease in our parish, now St. Thomas' Church. Ram's Chapel was the first, and I think the structure of St. Thomas is an improvement upon it. The date of its erection as a proprietary chapel, by a Mr. Devall, in 1777, for his tenantry, gives what I suppose may be the age of the houses in the Terrace, Clapton, which were also built by that gentleman. Dr. Robinson tells us it was enlarged in 1829, and was soon after consecrated. The Rev. F. W. Kingsford is now vicar, and however plain to ugliness the building is without, the present vicar has done his utmost to beautify within what should be beautiful as a house of God. Some years ago, on the 8th October, 1864, a terrific gunpowder explosion, between Plumstead and Erith, shook the houses in Upper Clapton, although so far away, to their very foundations, and the east wall of the church, directly exposed and opposed to the tornado-like air current, was split from top to bottom.

It was partly out of St. Thomas' district that St. Matthew's was formed, and under the valued and successful ministry of the Rev. L. E. Shelford, soon became a place of note, and its church crowded. His promotion to the rectory of Stoke Newington was much felt, but it is to be hoped that, succeeding him, the Rev. Mr. Bradford, and now the Rev. J. Cullin, will make the Church work here more prosperous than ever. Although not antiquarian, I ought not to omit the Upper Clapton Independent Chapel, founded in 1812. The Rev. Thornhill Kidd, was its first minister—to him succeeded the Revs. J. S. Mather, Algernon Wells and Thomas Gamble—energetic and valuable men. The Rev. W. A. Blake is the present pastor. Upper Clapton Chapel was rebuilt some thirty or more years ago, and the architect took as his ideal the interior of Henry VII.'s Chapel, Westminster Abbey, the marvellous creation of Sir Reginald Bray. This forms a beautiful and restful feature in the chapel, and is well worthy of note. There are two important points which I would bring to the notice of my readers before I leave this part of our parish. First, beneath the earth it would seem a most powerful underground stream exists, passing from Stamford Hill downwards, behind all the houses on the west side, and it never fails. The other is in the atmosphere, and for those who are afraid of thunderstorms must be very pleasant reading; but it is a remarkable fact that this neighbourhood has less of these formidable visitations than any other round London. I think the cause is not far to seek. Our storms generally come from the westward. Here we are bounded by the heights of Highgate and Hampstead, their attractive force draws down upon the hills the first onset of the storm, the wind-currents carry the electrically-charged clouds along towards the east, and before they can re-accumulate their electric force, the woods of Epping Forest and the wooded hills of Chingford, Loughton and Epping, exert their power, and so the clouds roll by! We hear them as they approach us, but rarely feel their full force when upon us, and, as experience has ofttimes borne out, the distant thundering, awakening the echoes of the Forest, are heard for an hour or more afterwards, when the fatal impress of the storm has left us.

In putting these discursive sketches before my readers, I stated that aught of interest attached to persons, as well as places, which came to my mind, should be brought under notice, of course, in connection with any particular locality; and so, before I leave Upper Clapton, I would refer to an interesting character, who, some years ago, was under my professional ken. I give neither name, nor address, for many reasons, but I may explain she was a lady of great age, and well travelled. She was an English woman, but the widow of a major in the "Black Brunswickers" under Prince Blucher, whose dashing exploits in the Napoleonic wars have rendered them notorious. Before the Indian Mutiny and the Crimean campaign had decimated our armies, the battle of Waterloo and its subsidiary engagements were to us as much as they still are in their lasting effects on the Continent; and even now as history, and brilliant episodes in our roll of fame, they do not die out. My late friend's graphic description of some of the incidents prior to, and at Ligny, Quatre Bras, and Waterloo, in which she was (to be near her husband), much mixed up, were delightful hearing; but I will only name one.

The regiment to which her husband belonged was rapidly moved about with the Prussian forces generally, between the 15th, and the final close of their fighting on the night of the 18th June, 1815. By the unexpected and rapid movements of Prince Blucher's army, she was, with a number of the usual followers of the army, left far behind; but, determined to get to her husband, if possible, she contrived to withdraw from her surroundings, and, clad in a military cloak and on an old horse of her husband's, made her way alone, as best she could, after the Brunswickers, yet not knowing where she might find them. Inquiries of the distracted natives, whose farmsteads and lands were beaten down by friend and foe alike—the knowledge that the great Napoleon, who had been so often successful, and was now upon the war-path, and might at any time be upon them,—rendered her task more difficult, because the people were more diffident. At length she learned that while Wellington with his army and Netherlanders, and Hanoverians, were near Brussels, Prince Blucher's forces were about Charleroi, Namur, Dinant, and Liege, but in which of his four divisions her husband might be she could not tell. However, guided by a peasant boy, she made for Charleroi, and arrived in its neighbourhood (I think) in the early evening of the 14th June.

I know it was before either the battles of Ligny, and Quatre Bras took place. Her guide brought her on to a ridge or hill, not very high, but from which she might be able to overlook the forces there assembled in the plain below, and not venture among them, until the presence of her husband's regiment was assured. The anxious wife had hit the right mark, and was in sight of the right division, but was astounded at the instantaneous disturbance of the forces below her. Field-glasses (fortunately not field-pieces) were being levelled at her by the outposts, and there appeared a general commotion. Not knowing what it was all about, but steadily carrying out her resolve, she soon met and was challenged by a vidette, the confusion speedily ceased, and she was directed to her husband's corps. The cause of the stir was soon explained. It was known that Bonaparte was not far off—his movements were erratic, impetuous, and sometimes daring—and when a figure wrapped in a military cloak, and mounted on a white horse, not unlike a mount of the Emperor's, was seen closely scanning the,landscape, they took my lady friend for the Emperor himself. The three engagements on three successive days, Ligny, Quatre Bras, and Waterloo, brought the Prussians in close conflict with the French armies, and at a serious loss to the Prussians at the first battle. My friend's husband, however, came off unharmed, living some years after. She witnessed much of the fighting, and, woman-like, helped to tend the wounded.[168]

"Clapton," formerly "Broad," Common is bounded on the east, after passing the steep descent to the River Lea, known as Spring Hill, by Buccleuch Terrace—perhaps a hundred years old—the view from their back windows is magnificent. Let my readers go and look at it. Down Spring Hill, and at the foot of the gardens of the terrace is a quaint row of cottages built on a terrace scooped out of the hillside. Here the view is charming, and, provided that the cottages be not damp, considering their position, a resident might imagine himself miles from London. Verdon's boat house is at the bottom of the lane, and recreation grounds around it.* **169**

On the Common, just by the terrace, is a pond of some years' standing, although not marked in Rocque's map, 1745. If it be not a thing of beauty, it is a joy for ever to the young and rising race—boat-sailing in summer and skating in winter. Behind it is Stainforth House, once the residence of Mr. Richard Foster—one of nature's noblemen—it is now occupied by the Suffragan Bishop of Bedford (subject to correction, I have heard at a peppercorn rental). Our parish may well regret that Chislehurst has more attractions to Richard Foster than Clapton. Houses now crowd what thirty years ago was an open space, principally the house, grounds and estate of a Mr. Arthur Craven, subsequently the residence of the late Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P. for Bristol—a Hackney man; and now the estate seems little better than a wilderness. The house and grounds of Mr. Cheston are on the west, and some good houses have been recently erected farther on. Just before our road runs into Stamford Hill, there are the remains—now dried up—of what was known, because of its shape, as "Leg of Mutton" Pond, that is also since 1745. **170**

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* *The Echo* thus writes of Clapton surroundings:—

The bathing place on the backwater of the Lea, beneath the slopes of Upper Clapton, is still frequented, though it does not present so animated a scene as it did in the dog days. The water cannot be called pellucid, but swimming there is better than in a tank, and the scene is pastoral. A pleasant gamut of colour runs through the emerald meads, the brighter tones of the sedge, and the quiet grey of the willows. It reminds one of the banks of the Bedfordshire Ouse and Cowper, whose "cool colonnade" of poplars is to be found here by the reservoir of the waterworks, where there is a chimney in the form of an Italian tower, which might be a campanile, and that, together with the poplars and the level country, recalls Lombardy. Towards evening, when shadows grow long on the grass, there is a tranquil charm about the spot which the pervading presence of the Great Eastern Railway cannot destroy. Indeed, the view over the Lea Valley from the heights of the mellow, old-fashioned suburb of Clapton is not inferior in its way to that of classic Richmond Hill itself. Beyond the quiet meadows are the lines of aspens and poplars, backed by the rounded forms of the elms about Walthamstow, with their masses of deep shadow, and on the sky-line the ridge of Epping Forest, with a spire here and there, sunlit, and standing out against the purples and ambers of the woods.

On the summit of Stamford Hill stood the "turnpike," its name erpetuated by the sign of a tavern at the corner of Ravensdale-road. Here we reach the confines eastward of our parish. I know not whether it constituted a parish boundary mark, or no, but lower down towards Tottenham was a "horse block," a stone fixed for riders to remount their horses, or ladies to dismount, on going up or down the hill which was at one time very steep. I have often ridden down it behind four horses in the old coaching days. This block was in nobody's way—had a strange interest attached to it, as one which Dick Turpin used—of course, this was the highway along which, if he ever did do it, he rode his mare "Black Bess" to York. Why was the stone removed? What stony heads and hearts some parish magnates, or the road commissioners must have! However, it is gone. The parish boundary passed westward close to Hanger-lane, now St. Ann's-road, and went westward as far as the New River, enclosing what is now Amhurst Park, when it again sloped southward and eastward towards the Stamford Hill-road, which is touched again about Manor-road (not marked in Rocque's map). Opposite this spot, or perhaps nigh to the Bird Cage Tavern, Rocque has marked a horse-shoe-shaped pond on the eastern side of the road. Coming from Tottenham, large houses are found on either side; mansions, some in extensive grounds. On the crest of the hill in the days of Queen Elizabeth, was a grove of trees. If the traveller look well about him he may discern a few old oak and elm trees yet, who with their companions, long since cut down to clear the ground for building, and other purposes, made this a beautiful hanging wood; and from this summit, (no doubt some feet higher than it is now), a splendid view of London, as it was then, could be obtained. It is said that it was on this spot that James I., having travelled from Scotland to take possession of his new crown and kingdom, by the old Great North road, was met by the Lord Mayor and Aldermen on the 7th May, 1603, and here obtained his first view of London, exclaiming "a splendid view indeed, at last the richest jewel in a monarch's crown is mine."[171]

This main road, running northwards through Tottenham, Edmonton, and Broxbourne, was formerly the only and chief road to York and Edinburgh, doubtless the ancient Ermin-street of the Romans. Going towards London, and still on the highest level, is the new Congregational church, pastor, now, the Rev. J. M. Gibbon. From its style and size one would regard it as the Congregational cathedral of the whole district, but as proof of the elevation of the land at this point, the tapering spire—I grant, of no mean height—can be seen for many miles along the Great Northern Railway, certainly from Barnet. Among the larger houses standing in their own grounds in this immediate neighbourhood resided, years ago, men who have made themselves famous in the mercantile and financial world. I cannot particularise their several dwellings. Some of our most opulent Jews, such as Rothschild and Goldsmid and others; also Mr. Solomon Maw, founder of the house of Messrs. Maw, Son and Thompson, in Aldersgate-street. This much I confess with regret, that Stamford Hill, like other suburban localities, is not as it once was; other spots, not nearly so healthy, and often not nearly so picturesque, are now the homesteads of the children of those who thought our parish good enough. Beyond the chapel, on the same side, is a most extraordinary-looking house and most like a Roman Catholic chapel. It is known as Gothic Hall, and was for some years the residence of Thomas Windus, F.S.A. The Gothic part is an annexe to the dwelling-house—built in this grotesque style, and designed for a museum. Dr. Robinson gives a long and interesting account of its contents, which both in the matter of paintings, curios, and antiquities, must have been well worth a visit. The contents in question, gathered together in eccentric fashion, were in like manner dispersed. I am glad to hear that they are not lost to public gaze, although where actually disposed, I have neither time nor space to describe.[172]

A visit to the house, and the kind and hospitable welcome awarded me by Mr. Smith, son of the aged widow lady who is now in residence there, gave me the opportunity, during a few spare minutes, of looking at the premises, its beautiful garden, and the Gothic hall itself. The house is a good, substantial dwelling-house, with well planned and noble apartments; but the special structure, *i.e.*, the hall itself, is built over the dining room. It is 30ft. by 18ft., in dimensions, and is after the style of such buildings in 1550, *temp.* Henry VII. The very landing on the staircase, forming the entrance to hall, has a groined ceiling with a keystone of the York and Lancaster roses. The roof is open, with cross timbers, supported by corvels, grotesquely carved, and in the centre are the Royal

Arms and supporters emblazoned on a shield, having on the right the arms of the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the left those of York, and those of 24 other bishops in compartments round. The chimney-piece is of Portland stone, with Gothic niches. Time and space prevent further details. In fine, the chamber would make a beautiful guildhall ; it is now, although most carefully preserved, used as a bedroom. The question as to the origin of the name " Stamford Hill " has not, as far as I have read, engaged the attention of antiquarians. Of course, it is on the high road to Stamford, county Lincoln, itself, and to that other locality in Yorkshire, notorious for the fearful battle of Stamford Bridge, which was fought there.

We had formerly our Stamford Bridge, namely, the bridge crossing the Hackney Brook, between the Stoke Newington railway station and the cemetery gates. Here, when the excavations for the high level main sewer were in progress, were not only discovered the fossil remains of some antediluvian monster, but several warlike weapons, pikes, swords, &c., which had evidently been cast away by those unfortunate citizens of London who had espoused the cause of Earl Warwick (the king-maker), whose career closed on the fatal field of Barnet (not 12 miles away), where he died, fighting on foot, on Easter Eve, 13th April, 1471. Edward IV. returned therefrom to the City of London victorious, and those of the citizens who had sided with Henry IV., having escaped from the battle field, threw away their arms, lest they should meet with the vengeance of the conquering king.

CHAPTER XXIII.

PAPERS LXVII., LXVIII., LXIX.

I LEFT my readers at Stamford Bridge—a point which corresponds with the Weavers' Arms, situate at the western extremity of Cazenove-road. This comparatively old tavern is an interesting reminder of the days gone by, when doubtless the Spitalfields weavers would come thus far with their families to get the fresh air, and would of course take refreshments on the slopes of Stamford Hill. I may refer to an opinion which has been given as to the origin of the name Stamford; it is that in crossing the Brook at this point, while horses and vehicles went through the water, foot passengers had to avail themselves of stepping stones, and that hence the crossing was called "Stone" (not "Stam") ford. I prefer my own conjecture as the more likely origin of the title. Passing down the "Ermin way" from the Hill itself, let me recall to my readers the view which then presented itself to the traveller on his way to London—say to our newly revived acquaintance Izaak Walton, on his homeward way with "Venator" from a day's fishing some 300 years ago. Before him would be our brook with its purling stream, which amongst the spreading meadows, and gentle slopes of the Muswell, and other hills to the north and west, would gather but few impurities. On the left would be seen the umbrageous lands forming the northern boundary of Stoke Newington Common, and on the right the beautiful and extensive park, latterly owned by and named from Sir Thomas Abney, and now the Abney Park Cemetery. We are now close on the borders of Stoke Newington itself, and a slip of the hamlet known as South Hornsey—for a short while longer an integral part of our parish, although a separate village.[173]

Leaving the cemetery gates, we have a row of shops and houses of modern date, occupying the site of other and larger houses, of which three only are left; one used as the Stoke Newington Dispensary, and another for an Invalid asylum. Who built and dwelt in these mansions I have never heard, but an old and valued acquaintance (now no more) Mr. Shirley Hibberd, used to speak of a most remarkable mulberry tree in one of the gardens, which from its age and appearance, must have been one of the first ever brought to this country; and which followed the usual style of that tree, in its advanced life, by growing rather out of than down into the ground, and hence becoming so inclined as to almost lie upon the earth, while still bearing healthy leaves and fruit. I believe it was at last destroyed utterly by a gale of wind. I might here remind my readers that on the introduction of silk weaving into this country, efforts were made to grow the silk also, of course by breeding the silk-worm, and of necessity the mulberry tree, whose leaves are their natural food; hence large numbers of the tree were planted about Spitalfields and Bethnal Green, and some of the old trees may be found in squalid spots and out of the way gardens at this very time. Our uncertain climate however, frustrated this effort, made some 200 years ago. At the corner of Church-street, Stoke Newington, there stood up till about 1868, an old wayside tavern, "The Three Crowns," and it should have been there now, with its massive timbers, gable ends, and oaken panelled chambers; who were to blame for its destruction, I dare not say, but they ought to feel ashamed of themselves! However the old landmark for some 300 or 400 years has gone, and there is no help for it. I admit a very good and substantial publichouse has replaced it.[174]

The tavern, it is said, was not always known by its present sign, and it is reported, with every semblance of truthfulness, that after our new King, James I., had taken his first look at the capital of his three-fold kingdom on Stamford Hill (as before narrated) and had been introduced to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, who there met him, he pursued his way until he reached the aforesaid ancient inn. We will imagine that he found it necessary to bait his horses there, and give his royal retinue some rest, but bearing in mind that our "Solomon" did in more advanced years treat, and was treated by a certain tinker not many miles from this spot, we can as readily believe that on this special occasion (increased responsibilities and enlarged monarchical sway looming in the near future), rendered an occasional stimulant, especially at such a notable time, necessary, so whether he drank with the civic authorities, or whether with mine host of this first wayside posting-house, the record fails to tell us, but we are led to believe that the event was signalized by calling the old inn "The Three Crowns," viz., of England, Ireland, and Scotland, as to be carried on the one head of our James the First—fervently I would pray never to be sundered.

High-street, Stoke Newington, extends from Abney Park Gates to West Hackney Church. The western side of the road is in Stoke Newington, and the hamlet of South Hornsey, and the actual dividing line between our parish and these is along the centre of the road. On the opposite side of the road, starting from the "Weavers Arms," is a row of comparatively modern buildings, probably shops from their first erection. From the road leading from Stoke Newington-common, reference to the parish map of 1745 shows a row of houses clearly set out, and among them a quadrangular building, forming almost a square; this is just opposite Church-street, while the plot from the present Board School to the "Jolly Butchers" public-house is still called the "Abney Gardens." Possibly here may have been the stabling, kitchen garden, and other offices attached to Sir Thomas Abney's mansion. Then we come to two narrow and ancient footpaths leading on to the common, "Bull-alley" and "Sanford-lane"; the latter, perhaps, a somewhat modern title, as in Church-street lived one Thomas Day, the author of that once most popular small boys' book, *Sanford and Merton* (Day's residence is called Sanford House), so proper a book for the former generation that the boys and their mentor, one Mr. Barlow, have formed the basis of many a joke in *Punch* a few years ago, and will this Christmas form a pantomine; although I am not yet so old, or so young, in my views of society generally, but that I feel compelled to admit that the tone of manners of the present generation of boys (and girls too) might be somewhat improved by a few hints, and more than a little polish, from the somewhat pedantic style of Masters Sanford and Merton towards their worthy tutor, Mr. Barlow! Will school managers, parents and guardians, kindly take the hint from one who is no longer young, and who has seen much of the inner life of families and the past and the present discipline of schools? "Manners make the man" would not be an inappropriate motto on the walls of our schools, as valuable to the juvenile members of the "classes" as of the "masses." A few houses of an earlier date were to be found along the eastern side of the high road, and midway between Brooke and Tyssen roads is the Wesleyan Chapel, with its extensive school buildings. This chapel was first erected in 1817—has since been frequently enlarged—and some few years ago was entirely rebuilt. I might here name, parenthetically, that in 1863 a small Wesleyan Chapel was built in Northwold-road, then called Keate's-lane, but it has long since disappeared. The next important building on our way towards London is West Hackney Church, between Church-road and Amhurst road. As I must quote from Dr. Robinson, I will try and coincide with him as to the architectural beauties of this structure, which is Grecian, not (as some think) Christian. It was built in 1825, Sir Robert Smirke being the architect, at a cost of £18,000, and will hold from 1,800 to 2,000 people. It has a handsome portico, and cupola. The altar is of Scagliola marble, richly ornamented, and over it is a stained-glass window, the centre of which is a copy of the celebrated altar piece at Magdalen College Chapel, Oxford. The first rector was the Rev. George Parroissien, M.A., who had been curate at St. John's, our mother parish church, for 36 years. He died in 1827. Among those who succeeded him are the Rev. Edward Birch, the Rev. — Lambe, the Rev. Thomas Hugo (of antiquarian renown), the Rev. Mr. Ottley, now vicar of Eastbourne, the Rev. Cannon Pollock, and at this moment the Rev. A. L. Jukes. The rectory stands on the Amhurst-road side, and behind is a churchyard, recently appropriated to the public as an open space. The whole site, with some glebe land adjoining, was the free gift of the late Mr. William George Daniel Tyssen, then Lord of the Manor of Hackney. Retracing our peregrination from the opposite side of the road towards Church-street, all were open fields 150 years ago, and to describe the variously-built houses and shops along this line would be merely an attempt at modern history.[175]

My record of the past would lack completeness were I to omit to mark out the dividing lines along the wide lengthy road once called Ermin-street, and now, in several sections, taking their name from the district traversed. Hence from High-street, we pass along the same road into what is mapped out as the Stoke Newington-road; commencing at what is now called Gordon-road on the west side, and ending at Castle-street. In the map before quoted all this western side is meadow land—subsequently, houses and shops were erected, probably, at first, and about 120 years ago, as detached private dwellings, and then the interspaces were gradually filled in, and more latterly shops were built out in front of these. At the corner of Walford-road is a handsome chapel—really very ecclesiastical in style, and built I presume, of Kentish rag-stone. It is known as the Devonshire-square Baptist Chapel, and the fact of its origin, *viz.*, a Baptist congregation having a chapel for many years in Devonshire-square, Bishopsgate-street, brings it within antiquarian notice—an instance, and not an unwise one, that churches and chapels migrate as well as the people. It is to be hoped it will be many a year before they move again.

We then come to Palatine-road, and here also hangs a tale of interest. Nearly 200 years ago there was a sudden migration of another sort to the foregoing—men with their families leaving their fatherland, the Palatine country, in Germany—driven out, not by Popish despotism, but by that fearful French revolution, visiting the quiet, steady workers, yet (unfortunately) well-to-do people, with fire and sword, and the terrible guillotine. These, as others have done before and since, fled to the land of real liberty—to the home of the free and the brave. On a plot of ground about this spot buildings were erected by the parish for the accommodation of some of them. These were called the Palatine Houses, eventually, some seven or eight acres, which constituted originally this particular estate, were still more built upon, leaving, however, some meadow-land, which is yet there. I have heard that the rentals go towards the maintenance of Stoke Newington Church. Barrett's Grove, which is, I think, part of the estate, must have been a pretty spot—when really a grove—some hundred years ago. Stoke Newington-road ends at Castle-street, or, as it was formerly called, Cock and Castle-lane, carrying us still further into our sister parish. On the eastern side, from

Amhurst-road to this point, there is absolutely nothing of interest, unless the pedestrian, as he slowly moves along, be interested in the various styles, both as to size and form, of the several houses he passes—so motley a row it would be difficult to find anywhere in the metropolis, or out of it.[176]

We next pass into High-street, Kingsland, terminating at Dalston Junction and (what used to be really) Kingsland Green. Before we take another step, let me give the ordinarily-received origin of the name of this district, "Kingsland"—or, more distinctively, the King's-lands. It is fully accepted that a large mansion, now altogether pulled down and cleared away, situate on the north side of Stoke Newington Green, was a royal residence – that here, possibly, Henry VIII. himself dwelt for a time, and that afterwards, during the reign of Queen Mary, of fearfully-notorious memory, her successor, the Princess Elizabeth, was kept in hiding by her Protestant friends. The surrounding country formed the hunting-ground or chase for the king, and, on the authority of an old chronicler, we read that in the reign of Henry II.. 1154-89, the citizens of London had all the open lands from Houndsditch to twelve miles north of the same for the chase—of this land Enfield chase is the last survival; but a writer on the subject has inquired, not without some reason (although I am no democrat, in the extremest sense of the term), how came it that so extensive a tract of country passed out of the hands of the people into that of the Crown. On the eastern side of the road, just before we come to Dalston Junction (I use the modern, as the most familiar designation), a line of house-building is marked as existing in 1745, and, probably, there were at that time, a line of shops, forming what is still a sort of market-place, facing Kingsland-Green.[177]

On the opposite side, also, certain buildings are marked down, and the open land, through which Balls Pond-road now runs, is called Kingsland-common. The road from the green towards London is now known as Kingsland-road, and its course through our parish terminates at the bridge over the Regents Canal. On the east side, open fields, but chiefly and latterly market-gardeners' grounds, occupied all the land on the Hackney side of the road; and on the west we have the hamlet of De Beauvoir Town—in my earliest recollection a good deal of this was wild open space, known as "Lead Mills common"—where white lead mills were then standing; and the land was open to the Lower-road (Essex-road), Islington, and beyond that to Canonbury itself, where the New River flowed through fields.

The most prominent object, however, in the De Beauvoir Town district—now so largely built over—was Balmes House, standing closely on the borders of Hoxton, and formerly in the parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch. The house itself is most striking, and has been often delineated; there is also an admirable engraving in Dr. Robinson's "*Hackney*" of the house and the estate, from an old print dated 1580. The house was built, and the grounds beautifully laid out in the year 1540—*temp.* Henry VIII.—by two brothers (Spanish merchants) named Balm. A portrait of one of the brothers, named Nathaniel Balmes, *æt.* 37, was found in one of the upper rooms, and also another of one John de Hemassen, dated 1543. The house is built of brick, and has two storeys in the roof. Formerly there was an entrance gate of brick, over the door-posts, on either side a globe, and over the centre a sun dial, bearing date 1623; this was destroyed by some vandal in 1794, who, with equally wondrous taste, put a modern gate in its place.

The grounds, as shown in the plan above-named, were laid out with considerable taste, and with avenues of forest, and even fruit trees. The house was surrounded by a moat, and only 100 years ago the only access to the house was over a large draw-bridge. I have said that this estate was doubtless once in the parish of Shoreditch, but is now in Hackney; and on this fact, it is said, hangs another tale, which may be partly legendary, although it is said that like circumstances have beeen followed by like results in the adjoining parishes of Leyton and Walthamstow. It is said that in 1680 a man was found drowned in this moat, which surrounded the house;—that the body was brought to the churchwardens of Shoreditch, who refused to receive and bury it—that an application was made to the Hackney authorities, who at once acquiesced, and buried the body at the charge of the parish—and hence "Balmes" and its surroundings became annexed to the parish and have been so ever since. In our parish register is the following entry, dated 1662: "A young man was found drowned in a pond near the 'Balmes,' not knowing from whence he came; was buried 21st March." The estate belonged to one John Philpots early in 1600, and in 1634, 25th June, was conveyed to

Sir William Whitmore, from whom it took its name for many years after. The house and moat were supplied with water from an ancient well in Canonbury field, adjoining Canonbury House, Islington.

It was here that James I., having met the Lord Mayor and Aldermen at Stamford Hill, came across the fields, surrounding the house, to the Charter-house, and thence through Moorgate to the City. And it was at this house that Charles I., on his return from Scotland with his Queen and family, was met by Sir William Acton, then Lord Mayor, on the 25th November, 1641, (and the road being too bad for carriages, by way of Shoreditch), was met by the Lord Mayor, who came through Sir George Whitmore's garden, and the Aldermen and officers were presented to the royal family while still seated in their carriages; after which, we are told, the King and Prince alighted from their carriage, and mounted their horses, riding in front of the cavalcade; thence they passed, by a road especially made for them, through Sir G. Whitmore's grounds to Hoxton, and to Moorgate. Contemporary and later historians have thought that this journey into Scotland, which closed at this very spot, gave the opportunity, of which the King's enemies too readily availed themselves, to compass about the measures which reached their tragical climax in the execution of that otherwise most amiable monarch. It was at a meeting at Whitehall, immediately after this journey, that Sir Harry Garraway, in the name of the citizens, offered the King a guard of 10,000 men, which the King declined, taking leave of the deputation, however, with thanks. Much affected by this refusal, Sir Harry Garraway, as he was leaving the royal presence, said: "Sire, I shall never see you again"—a prediction which proved too true.

Sir George Whitmore was succeeded in the estate by his son, William, who, in advanced life, married one of his servants, Penelope, by whom he had a son, "William," and a daughter. His son married a Frances Whitmore, but was accidentally killed in his own carriage on his way from Epsom, and the estate was eventually sold to Richard Beauvoir, of the Isle of Guernsey, in 1680; he died on 17th July, 1708, and was buried at Hackney, and then we find that Rachael Beauvoir, spinster, of Balmes, was married to Francis Tyssen, bachelor, on 8th November, 1712. Their granddaughter, Mary, married, as second husband, Richard Benyon. The estate really devolved on the Rev.

Peter de Beauvoir, of Downham Hall, Essex, who died in 1821; he was grandson of Richard de Beauvoir. The present owner is Richard Benyon de Beauvoir, of Englefield House, Berkshire. De Beauvoir Town, and its church as a centre, comprise a series of well-planned, good roads, and houses of variable quality, with which, however, antiquarian lore has absolutely nothing to do.[178]

The whole of this district was, in the days of the Tudor monarchs, known as Balmes, or Baumes Marshes, and, when tolerably drained, was the favourite resort of the athletes of those times—I mean the predecessors of our cricketers and football players, as well as the more direful if essential, army, train-bands, and militia. Here, no doubt, was the early training-ground of our redoubtable Honourable Companies, their barracks and military store-houses in Moorfields rendering this open space the most convenient for them, while the practice of archery by gentle and simple, old and young, had safe and full sway, because of the wide-spread lands ensuring safety in that pursuit, until the fire-lock entirely superseded the woodland craft of Robin Hood.

In a former paper I referred to the Regent's Canal forming the southern boundary of our parish, and, retracing our steps therefrom, we find our names of roads and rows of houses mementoes of former great and notable residents in this district. Thus, we have Whitmore-road, after Sir George Whitmore, a resident at the Balmes mansion in 1640-2, its most flourishing period; Acton-place and crescent, called after Sir William Acton, who was Lord Mayor of London at the same time.[179]

Then, we are referred by Dr. Robinson to a disputation between Shoreditch and Hackney relative to a certain close, or field of seven acres or thereabouts on the east side of "Balmes," and skirting a dwelling-house and cow-house, belonging to Mr. Ralph Harwood; the said disputation being referred to three persons to end, and determine, the same, *viz*, Francis Tyssen, of Hackney; Alexander Pitfield of Shoreditch; and Alexander William Withers, of St. Giles Without, Cripplegate. These gave their award on 6th February, 1696, *temp.* William III., forming the boundary at this point between the two parishes, and that a "Parish mark-bound post should be set up near to the watch-house at Stonebridge," on which their respective names should be inscribed. Time and space forbid further details, but I may just point out that this Stonebridge is perpetuated by Stonebridge-common, well known to many of us, and which, probably, formed part of a field then in possession of one "John Waxham." Here, I may also note that one of the smaller brooks or water-courses in our parish, long since vanished, came through the heights of Highgate and through Canonbury. It, doubtless, crossed Kingsland-road at this point, having over it a small *stone bridge*, and thence, skirting the west side of London Fields, flowed towards the "Cat and Mutton." This was entirely cut through and dispersed by the excavations for the Regent's Canal, and, for a few years, left a small dry ditch, crossed by a bridge just where the Broadway, London Fields, passes into Goldsmith's-row. This relic I remember well and have already mentioned it.

CHAPTER XXIV.

(Papers lxx., lxxi., lxxii., lxxiii.)

As we wend our way back from the Canal Bridge, towards Kingsland Green, it seems almost difficult to realize the assertion made in 1641, that, for coaches especially, and those then expected of Charles I. and his family, on their way from Scotland, that the road between Kingsland and Shoreditch was impassable by reason of the depth and foulness of it—and Pepys in his Diary writes that on the 12th May, 1667, " he walked over the fields (not by the roadway) to Kingsland and back again—a walk I think I have not taken these twenty years—but puts me in mind of my boy's time, when I boarded at Kingsland, and used to shoot with my bow and arrows in these fields." Now there is scarcely a finer, wider, and better kept road out of London—demonstrating, however, one other fact that Kingsland, Mile End, and other like roadways, on either side the Thames, were thoroughfares across extensive heaths, plains, or marshes, while the tortuous, narrow, and oft-times ill-constructed roads in Hackney, Stoke Newington, Homerton, and the like, bespeak the ancient residental localities—the clustering together of houses and cottages into villages and towns, in earliest times, amidst the woods and plains, or on the riverside.

Well, then, scrambling through the filth and mire of those more ancient days, we come to what was known as Kingsland Gate (now Dalston Junction), and on the left hand side, that is on the western side of the road, and at the southern corner of what is now Balls Pond road, we find before us an ancient hospital. A large public-house and shops now stand on its site, which extended to Tottenham-road, and some distance back. It would seem, as old Strype tells us, that in the year 1437, *i.e.*, *temp* Henry VI., John Pope citizen and barber (no doubt a surgeon-barber, the callings in those early days being combined), gave by will to the master and governors of the house of Lepers called "Le Lokes," at Kingsland, without London, an annual rent of six shillings and eight pence issuing out of certain shops, situate in Sherborne-lane, towards the sustentation of the said house at Kingsland for ever. The title "Le Lokes" is of doubtful interpretation, but it is thought to be derived from the Saxon "loc" or "locke," which means to be shut close or confined—a most indispensable necessity in those early times, when leprosy was certainly more common, even in England, than now, and the stringent laws set forth in our Bible prove the opinion, and the compulsory withdrawal from those affected thereby in ancient times and in the East. St. Bartholomew's Hospital was established as it is now in the reign of Henry VIII., and certain of these lock, or lazaars' hospitals were established in localities around, but remote from the city, under the auspices of the hospital, and this building was taken up by them, and considerably enlarged. In the middle of the last century it was burned down, a small chapel only escaping the fire.[180]

The hospital was rebuilt, but in 1761 the patients were removed, the site let for building, and the old chapel left as a proprietary chapel—as such I well remember it. Its style was early English-Gothic, with pointed windows and bell turret. To show how the highway had been raised, the floor of the chapel was *three feet* below its level. It was called St. Batholomew's Chapel, Kingsland, and was in the patronage of the governors of the St. Bartholomew's Hospital; it was probably coeval with the first structure, *i.e.*, about 450 years old, when it was finally pulled down some fifty years ago. There was formerly at the end of the building a sun-dial, having the following motto, *post voluptatem misericordia*, having a special reference to that class of disease, (latterly probably treated there), and for which the lock hospitals of the present day are set apart. In this chapel there were originally "squints," *i.e.*, slanting apertures in the north walls of the chancel, that these foul worshippers might look upon the altar and the "host" thereon, without a nearer approach, or mingling with the congregation. Kingsland Gate had for the writer most interesting associations—it was at this point, walking from Mare-street across London Fields and along (what was then really) Dalston-lane, he joined either the old long stage coach or the mail, for a journey of only 132 miles into the north of England, occupying from eighteen to twenty hours continuous riding, with only a stop for supper and breakfast—the coach on his last eventful journey was fourteen hours on the road. This main north country road was at certain times of the day most lively and on this last occasion *four* mail coaches and four, appointed as well, and after the fashion of the "four-in-hand club" of to-day passed closely, one behind the other and at mail coach speed, soon after eight o'clock every evening, having left the General Post Office, St. Martin's-le-Grand, as St. Paul's struck eight. In this respect

> "The light of other days has faded
> And all its glories passed."

I have already referred to Dalston-lane, so I would now with my readers peripatetically visit the hamlet of Dalston, or Dorleston as it was formerly called; and really it was at one time a very pretty, quiet spot—it was said, when I was a boy, to be the favourite residence of "young couples"—an easy walk from London (when railways and cheap fares had not made the distance between this and the city seem quite so far), so that the young bread winner, a clerk in some counting house or office, could easily get to and fro at small expenditure of time and labour, between his little country home and his work. In a history of London, 1806, it is called a small hamlet "which has nothing remarkable but its nursery grounds." In 1692 there is record of a survey of certain springs and wells in Dalston, with conduit pipes leading therefrom, and carrying the water to the conduit at Aldgate; query, did Aldgate get the credit of this (Hackney) Dalston water as its own? Where this conduit existed was in Navarino-road, and now on the Spurstowe Estate.[181]

Between Haggerston, which forms the southern boundary of Dalston, were, when I was young, open fields, market gardens, and latterly extensive brick-making plots. Out of the latter many a fortune must have been made in this locality. Park-holme-road was then the residential spot with its, at one time, pretty villa residences; Queen's-road was not; pathways ran up to Stone Bridge Common, and Albion-square and its neighbourhood. Richmond-road was formed out of a pretty grass-grown country lane, commencing at the north-western corner of London Fields, where the Duke of Marlborough tavern now stands (it was eventually carried through a field, then across Church-path and garden ground into Mare-street). Nearly opposite Lansdowne-road, stood in a field, afterwards made a market-garden, a very pretty and picturesque copy of a "Swiss chalet," as perfect as it could be—it was known as the Swiss cottage, one of our landmarks; this was on the north side: farther on, on the south side, and opposite St. Philip's Church, was a most retired mansion, situated in its own grounds, walled round, and with an entrance door in the wall. The roadway then led into Park-holme-road and to Dalston proper. In the year 1840 Messrs. Thomas and William Rhodes, whose brick-making and other land dealings had made them very rich, gave freely and voluntarily, and without any valuable consideration, a plot of ground on which St. Philip's Church and parsonage now stand. The church was erected, and consecrated on August 21st, 1841, at a cost of £5,600. It is an ecclesiastical looking building, and it is said the style is the thirteenth century—brick, with mouldings and enrichment of stone. It was one of the earliest district churches. One of its early vicars was the Rev. Mr. Gordon, for many years a curate at our old parish church. The land to the north and east, as far as the Grove, Hackney, was called *Pigwell* Fields.[182]

Pigwell Fields (having no connection with the plot just secured and opened near the Goldsmith-row for the inhabitants of Shoreditch for ever, and at one time called "Piggies Island") is evidently a misnomer, the proper name being originally "Pyke-well" or "Pitwell." The term "Pyke" in Anglo-Saxon means a "well-head," and it was in this plot of open ground, in what is now Navarino-road, that certain land springs were collected forming a well-head or conduit, whence so much of this side of London had some hundreds of years its only water supply; so I am disposed to call them Pykewell, and not Pigwell Fields. Would our Conscript fathers see the propriety of returning to the original nomenclature? Surely they would not be so pig-headed as to readily retain the present title.

Before further alterations in our populous neighbourhood quite obliterate "Pigwell-path," we will start from the Old Church-path, between the White Horse Public House, and Spurstowe's Alms Houses, and pass due west towards Dalston. Immediately on the left hand we find stables—in fact a "mews." Here the former residents in the Grove kept their horses and carriages, as is the present custom in the West End of London; and on the right hand we have the back garden walls of the once stylish and well-built houses in Grove-place. I may remind my readers that I mentioned before the existence, some seventy years ago, of a short street leading into Church-street from the Pigwell-path and used as a stand for Hackney, or, as they were then called, "Glass Coaches." Although once a footpath only, Pigwell-path has now emerged into a wide, well kept road—"Wilton-road,"—signalized still more by a large and most important (and I fancy far too costly) Board School. This we find on our left hand, and opposite we shall notice the meagre and last survival of what was once a flourishing gardener's ground. I have the impression that it formerly began at Navarino-road, which, starting from this point, and running northwards to Dalston-lane, is the oldest road about here—probably more than a hundred years old—and the before-named Conduit stood in gardeners' ground near this spot.[183]

This ground, which was reduced to the slip we now find there, had at its extremity in Park-lane or Place now Parkholme-road, a bun or cake house; one of those country places for light refreshments, which being so near to, yet out of London, had a questionable reputation, as a place of assignation between the frivolous, and sometimes vicious, of both sexes. Bearing a little to the right we find ourselves once more in the direct line to Kingsland-gate—and this part might well have been denominated Dalston-green. In 1745 only one or two houses are marked in Rocque's Map, somewhere about where the Tyssen Arms Tavern now stands—and while it no doubt was a decent country lane, this was bordered on either side by wide grass plots, and then the hedge rows which fended off the meadows, or extensively planted market gardens to Dalston-lane, continued from the Gate, returning eastward, and then making a sharp bend to the north, from the end of what is now Queen's-road, and the modern built St. Bartholomew's Church, until we reach the Ridley-road, also of recent formation; and coming directly to an old "hostel" known as the "Three Compasses,"—apparently a house of call for farm carts, and country-side vehicles—the road again makes a sudden turn due eastward, and we find ourselves in "Old Dalston" and what remains of it. Some of the good old houses have been cleared away, and the handsome buildings of the German Hospital have proved a most worthy and invaluable successor to them. One handsome dwelling which I well remember, with its high iron gates, and railings of wrought iron work, may have been the abode of some wealthy Londoner at least two hundred years ago. Then we pass on our right hand, and southern side of the roadway, sundry other old houses, whose history and that of their occupants is buried in oblivion. Dr. Robinson tells us nothing and Walford in his "Greater London" is severely silent, while Stow in the last edition by old Strype, altogether ignores it.[184]

Well there are still some pretty slips of green turf—now happily once more protected by posts and rails—and behind them are thoroughly comfortable dwellings, which are certainly characterized by a rural and quiet appearance, amidst the noisy Babylon of ours. What their gardens may be I cannot tell, but, doubtless, the ever rapacious builder, where he could get his foot in, has left them none too much. One large house deserves noting, and we do find an engraving of it in Walford's otherwise admirable "History of London, and Greater London," and that is the "Manor House, Dalston." It is of more recent erection than its neighbours, a house is there marked down in 1745. It stands within its own grounds, on the northern side of the road, before we come to the old tavern known as the "Red Cow," and east of a modern house, called "Graham House," which seems to occupy the site of a much older building, which had behind it very extensive grounds, and (according to my old map) a beautiful plantation. Probably the Manor House and its grounds may have been sliced off from this other mansion and premises.[185]

According to Lyson, another of our chroniclers of London and its environs, a Bishop of Exeter—one Offspring Blackall—was a resident somewhere about this spot, in the year 1710. In our old parish church we find among the vaults mapped out in this flooring, and close to that of Joannes Ivat de London, the name of Blackall, died 1683, and of his son; and Simpson goes on to tell us that his family was Offspring Blackall

Bishop of Exeter, and that they lived in Dalston—whether the Rev. worthy with his comical Christian name left any offspring behind him, or was buried in our church, we have no record. He was described as a strong controversialist and notably with Bishop Hoadley. I should conjecture that he was son of Thomas Blackall, as according to Lyson (from whom I am now quoting) his house was pulled down in 1695, and I presume that the Manor House, and some time after Graham House, were built on the estate with a re-arrangement of the grounds. It is now a Refuge for Destitute females. This institution was founded in 1805, by Zachary Macaulay, William Wilberforce, Stephen Lushington, Samuel Hoare, and Thomas Fowell Buxton, and was first at Cupars Bridge, Lambeth. It was removed to Hackney-road in 1811, and in 1849 to this Manor House, Dalston.

A little further on we are confronted with the Red Cow Tavern, which I remember when a boy to be a noted place for its tea gardens, bowling green and skittle alley. Although I never was inside the place myself, I have been told the grounds were prettily laid out on a sloping plot, looking towards the Downs and the Hackney Brook; and from its age and position, it must have been the favourite resort for the humbler residents, their wives and children, from the eastern end of the City, some two hundred years ago; a sort of Rye House without the ruins and the river. We are now even with the Navarino-road, and have on our right what was called Navarino-terrace, a well-built row of bow-fronted houses, having really good sized and prolific gardens behind them; in fact, comparatively spacious gardens seem to be the speciality of all the older houses in Dalston, large and small. For a moment I would return to Navarino-road, its age and name. Although not marked in the 1745 map, it was without doubt an accommodation farm road, for some hundreds of years, perhaps skirting the side, and being part of the fields through which it passed, and having no special name. That which it at length acquired, was from the celebrated naval battle of Navarino, a bay in Greece; not that fought 425 B.C., between the Athenians and the Spartans, but that on the 20th October, 1827, when the Turkish and Egyptian navies were almost utterly destroyed by the combined British, French and Russian fleets, under Sir Edward Codrington; a triple alliance, as it then proved, of a most effective and salutary kind. Hence the name of the road is comparatively modern. We now find ourselves on the brow of a moderate hill, having good semi-detached houses on the right (south side) and a row of what once were pretty, small villa residences, on the left.

This is Dalston Rise, and passing down the incline we should in ancient times have found the flowing, rippling Hackney Brook to pass through. In later times a bridge with three arches carried the road across the stream, but it was all open as it approached the bridge, and before now I have seen minnows in it just where the Lower Clapton Congregational Church now stands. Dalston-lane thence pursued a straight course to its termination, at the top of High-street, Hackney. On our right was the garden wall, beginning at the spot where the Pembury Tavern now stands, of the extensive grounds of Ward's house, already described. No houses were on that side even in my schoolboy days. On the left the villa residences, still there, must have been standing one hundred years. Prior to their erection a large farm was there situate, and it was doubtless from that spot that the view of old Hackney, (taking in the old church and the Manor Rooms) was taken, a view with which many of us are familar, through some photographic copies of it. That Dalston was not much to the front as a residential village some two hundred years ago, is patent from the fact that in the lists of select Vestrymen, I only find Jonathan Collyer in 1729, and the same name and Joseph Sureties in 1746. As leading us on to the next hamlet, I must refer to an interesting pathway which I well remember, leading from Dalston, not far from, and in the same direction of what is now Norfolk-road, a pathway from Dalston to Shacklewell. The field it crossed, (really dividing it into two plots,) had been evidently thoroughly cleared of all its brick-earth, *i.e.*, clay, but for some reason, probably because it was an ancient footpath, that remained, and midway was a small cottage, perched high and dry in this scooped out field, having secured its safety on the same terms. But all is cleared now, time and circumstances alter the face of Nature, as well as the claims of land tenure, and Norfolk-road now takes the place of that singular but ancient footway.[186]

Before we quite leave old Dalston I have to introduce another character to my readers; and as Charles II. formerly visited Nell

Gwynne at that interesting chalet recently re-edified and preserved in Waterlow Park, Highgate, so do we find George II., grandson of George I.,—*temp.* 1727-60, visiting his lady love, the Baroness de Bode, at a residence he took for her in old Dalston, and which is still standing, I refer to the houses Nos. 152 and 154, Dalston-lane, now occupied respectively by Mr. Arnold, and Mr. R. P. and the Misses Atkins. It has been called "a shooting-box." I know not why. The central part is the original house—almost intact; but it has been added to in front, bringing it nearer the road, and at the south and west sides at the back, in the usual incongruous style of the Georgian era. It was then divided, as is now seen, into *two dwelling houses.*[187]

Some seventy years ago, No. 154 was a ladies' school, and of the most select kind, and so enclosed within its own walls, that it was nick-named "nunnery" as the pupils were seldom seen, except when out for a walk or to church. Some sixty-five years ago it was taken by the late Mr. Atkins—father of the present family—and converted into a boys' school, as select, and almost as unknown to the general public as the former. It is almost inclusively a boarding school; the pupils being sons of Bishops, Clergy, and professional men. Here they may remain from eight to 18, until fit for the Universities, and truly, it seems a thoroughly happy home.

From the road you enter by a door in the wall into a small court yard, in which are stables, and kitchen and scullery offices; to the left, a green house well stocked with flowering plants, and small raised borders with ferns and shrubs in the centre. Towards the rear of the premises is a well found schoolroom and a spacious play-ground, also a small billiard room; and on the North London Railway bank some more green and forcing houses. On the right as you first enter, you pass up a few steps into a small hall, leading to a cosy and well furnished drawing-room, this, with the rooms immediately above, being the more recent addition to the house, perhaps 120 years ago. Over the drawing-room door has been affixed to the wall a magnificent piece of wood carving, found in a bundle of firewood purchased many years ago by the late Mr. Atkins. In quality it looks a "Grinlin Gibbons." From this landing we pass down four steps into an ante-room. Here the ceiling is very low, with massive oaken beams, and under the flooring, now of wood, are very fine red tiles, this apartment being, in fact, the original entrance hall. Beyond this is a most comfortable room, with the same heavy beams, and low ceiling. The walls are eighteen inches thick, the two windows are recessed, with seats in each, and the window sashes are solid mahogany.

By a narrow passage-way we come into the kitchen, one of the smallest I was ever in; one part is high, and gets its only light from a skylight over the dresser, but that before the kitchen range is barely six feet high, contracted enough in all conscience; nevertheless, for sixty years, and more, a good dinner has been daily prepared there for a large family, schoolboys and all—and everything bespoke cleanliness, wholesomeness and comfort. A door was opened to show me the way to a spacious coal-cellar, but as a proof how little social comforts were arranged for in the early Georgian period, this last entry was made by the late Mr. Atkins soon after he took the house, as the only way to the coal-cellar was through the drawing-room. The upper floors, although curiously contrived to bring the level of the original house into direct communication with the higher and newer addition, gave ocular demonstration of how comfortable an old fashioned building could be made, and that in very deed these schoolboys were in clover. In some of the first-floor rooms the flooring is of oak planks, twenty-five inches wide, by careful measurements, and looked as if they had not been down one year.

In connection with the family of the Baroness de Bode, I was informed that by Royal warrant of George II., a berth in the Post Office—valued at £500 a year—was to be always filled by one of her lineal descendants up to a certain fixed period, which closes with the death of the present holder of the same. The graves of the family are to be seen in our old churchyard. I have alluded to the addition made towards the back and western side of the old house, now tenanted by a Mr. Arnold. The greater part of this is comparatively modern, and there is a good garden skirting the North London Railway and the German Hospital grounds. I have also heard that the row of houses along this part of Dalston, obtained the sobriquet of "Rainbow-terrace," owing to the glaring and various colours of the male servants' liveries—as most of the dwellers hereabouts kept their carriages. My best thanks are due to the Misses Atkins for their courteous attention and the full information they gave me, an entire stranger to them, and making a surprise visit, and I am sure my readers will endorse the same.[188]

If anyone were to ask me the shape and boundaries of our hamlet Shacklewell—called Shacklewell in Roque's map—I should describe it as in shape like the half skins of leather as purchased by our saddlers, representing the exact half of a carcase. It is bounded on the south by Ridley-road, Dalston, on the east by Amhurst-road, or we might say the Enfield branch of the Great Eastern Railway, on the north (as marked in 1745) by the north side of Stoke Newington Common, and on the west by the Stoke Newington-road. That there is some antiquarian interest attached to it I am certain, without being accounted an antiquarian gone mad, and will admit that what there is of it is most probably confined to the "green" and its immediate surroundings. That portion in the map before me is called the cross-way, and why, no reason is given. It cannot be a cross-way from Kingsland to Stamford Hill—it lies too much to the east, and Ermin-street (the Kingsland and Stoke Newington-roads) dates from early Roman times. The same may be said of Hackney and Clapton, with one exception, and to that I have referred in one of my earliest papers.

I make the conjecture once again that here we find one of the missing links to that Roman way, which crossing the River Lea, at what was called the boys' bathing place, passed westward along what was an ancient farm road (now Blurton and Powerscroft-roads), through Clapton-passage, and thence on to this cross-way at Shacklewell, where it eventually merged into the Ermin-street, and so into London, thus forming an important roadway into Essex. Shacklewell-lane—the original entrance by road into the hamlet—is opposite Castle-street (Cock and Castle-lane) Kingsland. And now I must test my own memory, and bring before my readers the landscape here, about some 70 years ago, more or less. If curiosity takes them to this locality, and they will pass down Ridley-road (a name forcibly reminding us of that noble-hearted Bishop, an ancestor of our Lord Amherst, who sealed his faith in Jesus at the stake), which skirts the North London Railway, and turning down Colvestone-crescent into St. Mark's-square, by its noble church, and northwards to the great printing works (Eyre & Spottiswoode's, Her Majesty's Printing Office), they will observe that the land slopes down gently to the present level on which the church stands, and again gradually ascends to Shacklewell-lane.[189]

The first houses on the right hand side as we left the Kingsland-road are not marked down as existing in 1745, and I should imagine they date from about 1800. At the largest house in this row, I was, as a child, a frequent visitor. Who our friends were I cannot remember, and none are alive or living hereabouts to help me. I know it had a good garden, with an entrance into the fields at the back, where the streets and church just named now stand. It was a lovely sloping meadow with a small stream running along its lowest level; and the ground, by a gentle incline, came up to the level of what is now Ridley-road. The gardens of the houses in Kingsland-road, and on the east were continuous with the land, and its solitary cottage on the clay bank, named in my last paper. Archery (in that day one of the few out-door amusements of the better classes) was a favourite exercise with my friends on this field, which with its surroundings of hedgerows, trees, shrubs and streamlet, formed a *petite* landscape which has not yet faded from memory.

On the opposite side of Shacklewell-lane, close to Kingsland-road, was another good house, somewhat modern, standing in its own grounds, which were surrounded by a high brick wall. The lane then went on due east to what are now the Printing Works, and then made a sudden bend to the north, leaving, however, a still narrower country lane—in line of the present Downs Park-road—which ended at the margin of the old Hackney Brook, as it formed the western boundary of the Downs—crossed it by a plank footbridge, and thence by a footpath across the Downs themselves to a point where the Cricketfield-road ends at the Sisters' Tavern.

In its course northwards it passes through Shacklewell-green, and here our antiquarian interest is aroused, for on this green—on which side, however, the records fail to tell us—stood Shacklewell House, the seat of the Heron family, doubtless the residence of Sir Thomas Heron, Master of the Jewel House to Henry VIII., 1509-47, who, with Christopher Urswick, the then vicar, rebuilt, or rather thoroughly repaired, our parish church. Dr. Robinson gives a good engraving of it as it appeared in 1700. Walford mentions it as the abode of Cecilia, the daughter of the great Sir Thomas More, who married George Heron of Shacklewell. He became involved in the ruin of that noble-hearted statesman, their only child died in infancy, and the Heron family became extinct. May I crave a few minutes' digression while I point to the character, career, and fate of that great and good man, Sir Thomas More, who may have visited his daughter at Shacklewell from time to time, and possibly have worshipped in our old parish church. I quote from *Chambers' Encyclopædia.*[190]

Sir Thomas More was born in 1480 in Milk-street, City. He was educated at St. Anthony's School in Threadneedle-street, City. When only 15 he entered the establishment of Cardinal Morton, Archbishop of Canterbury, and in 1497 went to Oxford, where he became the friend of the celebrated Erasmus. From thence he entered at New Inn and Lincoln's Inn, London, as a law student, entered the legal profession, and was in active practice when Henry VIII. came to the throne. He soon attracted his attention, and was made a Privy Councillor, and became the King's prime favourite. On the deposition and death of Cardinal Wolsey he was made Lord Chancellor. At that time his father, Sir John More, was the oldest judge on the King's bench, being 90 years of age, and one of the most touching sights of those harsh times was our Lord Chancellor, the son, every morning asking the blessing of his father on his knees, before he, the highest in authority, took his own seat. The office of Lord Chancellor had always been held by ecclesiastics, and Sir Thomas More was the first lawyer ever appointed to that office. He had a true conception of the value of his Sovereign's favour. So long as he fulfilled his behests, so long was he his fast friend. But his inexorable obedience to truth and justice brought him at last into antagonism with his tyrannical and bloodthirsty King (for all must admit, whatever benefits Henry VIII. conferred on our kingdom and estate, his will, when opposed, placed him on a level with a Nero). And so it fell out. Sir Thomas More could not conscientiously give his authority to the King's divorce from his first wife, Catherine of Arragon, nor sanction his marriage with Anne Boleyn, so he resigned his Lord Chancellorship. He was then committed to the Tower, where he remained a prisoner for 13 months. On the 6th of May, 1535, he was brought to trial at Westminster for high treason, where it was said no so innocent a culprit had stood for 1,000 years. By the foulest perjury he was found guilty, and was beheaded in the Tower on 6th July, 1535, and his head placed on London Bridge, from which, however, it was soon removed and taken charge of by his loving daughter, Margaret Roper. So perished one of the brightest lights of those dark times, and the thought that he may have occasionally visited our neighbourhood is a pleasing one, for a better man never lived.

Whether on the western, or eastern, side of the green the old Manor House stood, I cannot clearly make out. There was for some years a good-sized house on the western side which was regarded in that light, but it was comparatively modern. I have visited it professionally many times. It had a good garden, a very pretentious exterior, and an iron gate with stone piers on either side, but that has all passed away. A terrace of small houses, well built, about the early part of the Georgian era, and for some while empty and utterly forsaken, has just been put in thorough repair, and will doubtless outlive many of the modern and more showy dwellings around them. On the eastern side of the green are some rather ancient buildings, various in character, and more quaint than beautiful. At the house (I think called Milton House, No. 130), I am informed by a kind correspondent, resided Vincent Novello, founder of the great music publishing house. He was born in 1781 and died at Nice in 1867; and Tom Dibden, son of the celebrated national nautical song writer, lived some while in Dalston-lane. Leaving the green, the road, formerly all Shacklewell-lane, now Rectory-road, goes due north until it ends in Stoke Newington-common. I presume the title "Rectory" was given to this part of it, as formerly the residence of the West Hackney rector was in this road, at the corner of what is now called Church-road.[191]

Stoke Newington-common (in ancient days known as "Cockhanger-green") is now secured to the public for ever, and those whose lives may be spared ten years longer will realise the value of the gardening operations—tree and shrub planting and the like—in preserving and beautifying this oasis in our wilderness of bricks and mortar. Dr. Robinson tells us that in the year 1740 Thomas Cooke, of Stoke Newington, built a large house on Stoke Newington-common, divided it into eight distinct apartments, to be occupied by eight poor families, supported by the rentals of certain property at Eltham in Kent. After sundry alterations in the details from time to time, each family lives rent free, and receives four guineas a year, and two sacks of coals at Christmas. These alms-houses have lately been rebuilt, and form a pleasing object on the north side of the road as you pass out opposite Abney Park Cemetery.

Before closing this portion of my ramblings, it may prove interesting to my readers to recall another picture of the past, in a retrospective glance at that part of our walk from Shacklewell towards Stoke Newington Common—I would include that portion of the Amhurst-road which is situate between Anton-street and Evering-road. Market-gardens and meadow land occupied much of what is now the eastern side of Amhurst-road, and the land gradually sloped down to the Hackney Brook. None of the large houses with their capital gardens were there sixty years ago, but a row of small houses now called "Amherst Terrace" were standing some time before, and bordered one of the ancient pathways across the Brook, and on to the Downs, by the side of the "Amherst Arms" public house. Some of the houses on the eastern side of Rectory-road, as far as the Congregational Church, at the corner of Evering-road, are of various dates and styles of architecture, and date before my time.[192]

From that point all was again open fields, and it is only within the last thirty years that the view from Upper Clapton opposite the Railway Station, towards Rectory-road, was perfectly open and unobstructed by roads, houses, or buildings of any kind. As I have before-named, the Common itself was a free and open space, with a few good houses around it, especially on the south side, and standing in their own grounds. The Brook flowed across the road (there was a bridge over it) rippling, clear, and free from sewage. On the north side, where Osbaldeston and Alkham-roads now run, was an extensive market gardener's ground, with dwelling house upon it, and clumps of forest trees, of no particular form or beauty, here and there; the cuckoo and the nightingale were regular visitants in their season, and the spot was country in very deed. Of course, no railway crossed the Common, yet with the change of scene which now presents itself to the public of A.D. 1893, it is but fair to acknowledge that the purchase, and securing for all time for the people, of Stoke Newington Common, and the planting and fencing, which, as adornments and due protection to the trees and shrubs, enhance the gift, are a credit to our authorities, who deserve our warmest thanks. As years roll on, Stoke Newington Common must become increasingly picturesque.

Glimpses of Old Stoke Newington.

CHAPTER XXV.

(Papers, i., ii., iii.)

MAY I regard it as a compliment that my efforts to recall the past of old Hackney have called forth the curiosity of your readers as to what I may venture to say of that portion of our extensive parish, which is itself a town of no mean proportion ; which was drawn into closer confederacy with Hackney by the Metropolitan Local Management Act of 1855, and which, by an Act, which will be that (I suppose) of 1893, will be once more separated from us. That Stoke Newington, to which I am about to direct my attention, could have continued that self-existence, which up to the former date she had, it were difficult to question. We must presume that the wisdom of the legislature which decreed the union was in no wise inferior to that which has now pronounced the divorce. I have an impression in my mind that our sister parish was some fifty years ago rather a "sleepy hollow," and that it was not, strange to cite the cause, until after the opening and laying-out of the Abney Park Cemetery that the district seemed quickened into new life. I quote it reverently, it seemed as "a life from the dead."

Stoke Newington proper has for its eastern boundary the Stoke Newington-road from Castle-street, to where the Enfield branch of the

Great Eastern Railway crosses the Stamford Hill-road at Stoke Newington station; thence it follows the western side of the railway as far as about Dunsmure-road, where it touches the railway; from thence in a north-westerly direction to Amherst Park-road, where the northern end of Bethune-road ends; the boundary line is then due west, with but slight curves, until it reaches the Green-lanes, close to the Tile Kilns. The Green-lanes form its western boundary as far as Stoke Newington-green, whence, bending eastward, it goes up to St. Mathias-road. Here, by some strange ancient arrangement, a block of South Hornsey comes in, including the Milton to the Cowper-roads. Then we find another block of Stoke Newington, bounded by Cowper-road, Boleyn-road, Castle-street, and the Stoke Newington and Palatine-roads (including St. Mathias Church), and the Palatine Estate I have before referred to. Brighton and Walford-roads, and the Victoria-groves, east and west, again come out at South Hornsey; and the latter part of the Stoke Newington parish boundary is by Allen-road, Nevill, and Dynevor-roads, bringing it once more into line with the old Ermin-street (*i.e.*, Stoke Newington-road) at this last point. Chroniclers ought not to legislate, but it would not seem unreasonable that if Stoke Newington is severed from its mother parish, Hackney, it should take to its child, South Hornsey, for most decidedly it is thoroughly within its embrace. 193

We find the name of the parish in Domesday Book as "Newtone," subsequently it is recorded as Newnton, and Stoke Neweton as early as 1391, *temp.* Richard II., and, as Dr. Robinson tells us, even "Neweton Canonicorum," and in 1633 "Stoke Newenton.' As the term "Stoke," or "Stoc," is the Saxon for "Wood," and that as late as 1600, there were nearly 100 acres of forest, *i.e.*, the Forest of Middlesex, in the parish, the designation as the "Town (or 'Ton') in the Wood" ("Stoc") becomes self-evident. The Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's are ordinaries of the parish, as it is within the liberty and jurisdiction of the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's, London; and it is probable that they received this gift from King Athelstan, A.D. 940, nearly 1000 years ago. A survey taken in the year 1687 gives the acreage of the parish as about 550 acres, divided amongst six proprietors, and about fourteen landholders. Of them was a Sir Francis Popham, and Henrietta Laura, Countess of Bath, the latter had a farm of sixty acres. The farmhouse

(Dr. Robinson tells us) stood on the south side of Church-street, and between it and Stoke Newington Green, probably about east of where the new Parish Church and the Rectory are now situated. Tracing backwards the ownership of this particular estate, it is known that it was at one time tenanted by one Hercules Crosby, most likely the father of the Alderman Sir John Crosby, builder of, and resident at, Crosby Hall, still standing in Bishopsgate-street. It subsequently became the property of Henry Guy, who was secretary to the Treasury during the reigns of James II., William and Mary, and Queen Anne. He died in 1710, and the Earl of Bath succeeded to the greater part of his estate, and from him passed to the afore-named Countess of Bath.[194]

Before I resume my peregrinations it is but right to note one distinctive feature of Stoke Newington, formerly more in view than it is now, but nevertheless a striking addition to the aspect of a village which benefits less than Hackney from its surroundings. I refer to the New River —"new" no longer. Its originator, Sir Hugh Middleton, Bart., commenced it by fashioning a large basin at the little village of Amwell, near Hertford. This was of some depth, and embraced copious springs; from thence, by a most circuitous course, to ensure a proper level and a steady flow, the water was brought from the Chadwell springs, as they were called, a distance (because of its windings) of nearly 39 miles, although the spot was but 20 miles from London. Formerly its terminus was near Sadler's Wells, at a great reservoir, then called the New River Head, but, latterly, much of its course in the immediate neighbourhood of London has been shortened, covered over, and passed through culverts; while in its earlier flow, as near Hornsey railway station, and at Brownswood Park, and between Lordship-lane and Bethune-road, filtering beds, and at the last-named spot a lake-like reservoir has been constructed. It was begun in 1608, and completed in 1613. The family, and the baronetcy of Sir Hugh Middleton, are, it is believed, extinct. The last baronet, too fond of ale (it is said) when he could get it, was boarded with a worthy farmer at Chigwell, where he closed a miserable, because sottish, career; and, as the last male survivor, the title expired with him.

It would be as well that I commence our perambulations from the nearest point to London, and on the Stoke Newington-road—the Roman Ermin-street. Of this marvellous relic of our Imperial Roman visitants, it may not be out of place to say that this great road starts from Newhaven, on the Sussex coast, traverses Sussex and Surrey, crosses the Thames and the then City of London, from which it emanates at Cripplegate, and thence to our starting point. For much of the information just given I am indebted to Dr. Robinson's "History of Stoke Newington, 1842." Starting from Castle-street, we pass a few shops, and then a row of good private houses standing back from the road, and with garden fronts. These probably date from 1800, and bound, on its east side, the Palatine Estate, where an open field still exists. The rents from this estate go towards the repairs of the parish church, and churchwardens' expenses. Barrett's-grove runs across it to the west, and here are some half-cottage, half-villa residences of somewhat old style. Arrived at Palatine-road, the eastern boundary of another block of South Hornsey is reached, and we must get beyond Victoria-grove before we are on the Stoke Newington border again. Here, passing a few shops, we are in front of the well built and extensive police-station, with all its present modern equipments, among which excellent "ambulances" for the injured living, or for the dead, are not the least.[195]

A number of small shops, and squat buildings are next passed, which, if not particularly striking, are reminders of what the road once looked like, say, when John Gilpin (if he ever found other place than in a poet's brain) rode at headlong speed from London to Ware. In this row is one old wayside inn, the "White Hart," formerly noted as a stopping-place for those marvellous old constructions, the carrier's stage-waggon, with wheel tyres almost as wide as our steam rollers, sometimes drawn by six or eight horses, and with a hood before and behind, under which, well tucked-up in clean straw, I have seen many a traveller—sometimes a whole family, children and all—journeying along their toilsome way, but often very warm and comfortable. Soon after passing Dynevor-road we light upon what was once an old public-house, perhaps an ancient one, the "Rochester Castle." Why so named I should much like to know; at any rate, the old structure has disappeared; and on its site has been erected as striking and as chaste a building as could be seen anywhere in the metropolis. It is of red brick, with stone copings and dressings; the ground floor supported by two well-adapted marble pillars; and the front, a "bay," carried up to an elaborately-executed arched pinnacle. In cost and style it is a castle indeed, and an ornament to the neighbourhood; the style is slightly after that of the Sir Paul Pindar, once the residence of our Ambassador to Spain, who lived in Bishopsgate-street. This exquisite old building has been removed for the Great Eastern Railway extensions, but, I am told, has been taken to South Kensington, and, I presume, re-erected to show its artistic beauties there. On our way to Church-street we pass several good substantial buildings, shops of the best kind, and a branch bank, all of modern invention.[196]

The former sign of "the Three Crowns" was the "Cock and Harp,"—Why?—In the first place, in this meandering thoroughfare, which, like many a village in the present day, constituted the town itself, we find the tavern at one end—the turning out of the great highway, Ermin-street,—and the church at the other, that church being under manorial guardianship, the former Baronial Manor House. Then as to the tavern's sign (trusting I may not be convicted of "harping" on idealisms) may not this, perhaps the most important, if not the first built hostelry in this ecclesiastical village, have been placed under the patronage of St. Peter, whose symbol was the "Cock," and under the "Harp" as a sign of David, whose Psalms occupy so important a place in the Church Worship of Rome, as of Protestant England. As I have before stated, old and original public-house signs are most significant, and are alike worthy of note and interpretation. While on this spot I am reminded that the noble mansion still standing, and now "the Invalid Asylum," facing the main road, (but yet in Stoke Newington) was once the residence of a rich Quaker—Mr. John Wilmer—whose extraordinary instructions relative to his burial are detailed in an admirable sketch of the History of Church-street, Stoke Newington, by Giltspur. He was buried in his garden just on this spot, and the handle of a bell was attached to one hand of the corpse, which handle was connected with a wire, which would ring a bell in his former residence. An annual inspection of these fittings was likewise enjoined, but not now carried out. Where Summerhouse-road now runs, was, some few years back, a pretty villa residence standing in its own grounds, and very much in a summer house style. It had evidently been the design and residence of a person of great taste. Those who latterly dwelt there, and whom I visited, were a Mr. and Mrs. Evans. The road has no thoroughfare, coming up to the cemetery grounds. Fleetwood-street is on the site of a grand old mansion, once the residence of Lieut.-General Charles Fleetwood, as described by that excellent local archœologist, E. J. Sage, Esq., who carefully surveyed it, and has some relicts from it, before its final destruction; it was a place of great interest. It was built in Queen Elizabeth's time, and had some sixty or seventy rooms in it, with a large garden and eight acres of land. It was for some years the residence of Sir William Hartopp, who married Mary Coke, of Melbourne; (on the ceiling of one of the rooms was the full rayed sun-crest of the Coke family). On the death of her husband she became the third wife of Lieut.-Colonel Fleetwood, and on this account Fleetwood became a dweller in Stoke Newington, occupying one half of the mansion; while his son-in-law, Sir John Hartopp, had the other; a not unfrequent custom in those days. Lieut.-Colonel Fleetwood was a Lieut.-General in the Army of the Commonwealth under Oliver Cromwell. His second wife was Bridget, eldest daughter of Oliver Cromwell, and widow of Lieut.-General Ireton, and it was said that Cromwell nominated him as his successor, but the document (under his own hand) could not be found. Richard Cromwell, who thereupon succeeded his father in the Lord Protectorate, proved so incapable that he was soon set aside. Change of views of the country at large soon followed, and the restoration of the monarchy under Charles II. was the result. Consequently General Fleetwood entered into private life, and died here on the 4th October, 1692, aged 74, and was buried in Bunhill Fields. On the death of Sir John Hartopp the mansion was occupied by a Mr. Cook, a Turkey merchant, who was also a governor of the Bank of England, and a trustee of Morden College, Blackheath. He died here on the 12th August, 1752, and by his will ordered that his body should be carried to Morden College; that there it was to be taken out of the coffin, wrapped round with a winding sheet after Eastern fashion, and buried, standing upright in the earth; and the coffin was to be laid by for the use of the first pensioner who might need it. These instructions were fully carried out. Subsequently Sir Nathaniel Gould, and then a family named Hurlock, dwelt here; and later on Baron Perrott of the Exchequer. On the opposite side of Church-street, leading from the main road, is a row of shops, and then a new large Board School, and then more shops. On this latter spot was a large handsome house, standing in its own grounds, with a carriage sweep in front, and light wrought-iron railings. This was for some years the residence of Lieut.-Colonel Gant, in command of the 1st or King's Own Tower Hamlets Militia. Lansell-street, and Kersley-road now cover grouud that was once market gardens, and cow lairs. Next to them and opposite General Fleetwood's, was another very large mansion, the age and occupiers of which it would be hard to tell, it had been for some years divided into two houses, but has now entirely disappeared.[197]

Some villa residences, and Abney Park Chapel, bring us on to a row of well-built, but very plain houses, dating from Queen Anne, or at latest George II. They are thoroughly well-built, and not quite so ugly as later constructions.[198]

Although so altered, and with a road-way from end to end as smooth and level as a billiard board, Church-street, Stoke Newington, has a village street appearance about it, or somewhat like those long, slightly serpentine roads which take us through a small country town. Why Church-street should be so highly favoured, and Mare-street, the main thoroughfare of Hackney town, so rough and irregular in surface, and in variety of paving, our *patres conscripti* may be able to explain——it seems to us "small fry" rather unaccountable, perhaps better things are in store for old Hackney yet. The "Three Crowns" at the corner has been described, and a few yards down we pass on the north side some plain small houses and shops; some probably nearly a century old, but built at that time when domestic architecture of the small tradesman's type, was plainly ugly. Passing on we have on our left hand (still south side of the street) a row of substantially built houses. In one of these, the house under part of which is an arched entrance to extensive premises belonging to the General Omnibus Company, Giltspur records a certain ghostly visitant—probably since quite at rest. The tale is too long for this book, and I must therefore refer my readers to his graphic account. The great and good John Wesley would have put it along-side of his reminiscences of "Old Jeffrey," the ghostly tormentor in his father's parsonage at Epworth, Lincolnshire.[199]

We now come back to a spot opposite Abney Park Chapel, and find a good breadth of high, well-furnished wrought iron railings—I imagine of Sussex iron—and, strange to tell, filled in closely with wood, so that neither the beauty of the ironwork, nor the solemn and impressive scene of the "Campo Sancto" beyond, are discernible. May I venture to suggest to the worthy directors of the Abney Park Cemetery the desirability of bringing within public gaze a view, which may perchance have a spiritually healthful effect on even the careless passer-by. If the very heathen of olden time brought the *memento mori* (a skeleton) into the midst of their gaiety and feasting, should we Christians withhold the momentary glimpse of a spot so sacred, and a forcible reminder that all must die. Would Thomas Gray, even had he stood under the portico of Abney Park Chapel, have there been inspired to write his exquisite elegy, trying to look over that "enclosed fence" beyond which

> "Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
> The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep."

Or, gazing on the tombs of the more mighty dead, have breathed the touching query,

> "Can storied urn, or animated bust,
> Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath ?
> Can honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
> Or flattery soothe the dull, cold ear of death ?"

This to the worthy directors of Abney Park Cemetery, of which more anon. I can only refer to the house that once stood on this particular spot before I close this paper. In the year 1690 a Mr. Gunston bought some 25 acres of copyhold land, and a house which stood thereon. He pulled the house down, and erected on its site a much larger one; in fact, a mansion. This house, which I well remember, having often visited it, was a handsome building, and on the roof was an observatory, in which, it is said, Dr. Watts composed some of his hymns for children. Mr. Gunston died just before the completion of the mansion on 11th November, 1700. He was the only son of John Gunston, a wholesale linen-draper in London, and from time to time, from 1684, he made frequent purchases of land in Stoke Newington. On Mr. Gunston's death the estate came to his sister Mary, wife of Sir Thomas Abney, Lord Mayor of London. At his death, in 1721, his widow came into full possession of the house and estate. She resided in it until her death, 12th January, 1749; her daughter Elizabeth was sole heiress, and she died, unmarried, in 1782. Sir Thomas Abney was buried in St. Peter's, Cornhill, but his widow and her daughter Elizabeth, *ætat* 71, are buried in the chancel of old St. Mary's Church. The mansion was owned and occupied by Mr. James W. Freshfield in 1742. We now only see where it stood. Abney House was last used as a Wesleyan Theological College, removed from Hoxton to that house, and from thence to a beautiful building purposely erected by the Wesleyan body at Richmond, Surrey. The Rev. Thomas Jackson, father of the late rector of Stoke Newington, was for awhile in residence as "Principal" here.

Having briefly written of Abney House, and its owners, my next duty is to refer to a visitor, the Rev. Dr. Isaac Watts, who coming for a few days to the Abney family, extended his stay to thirty-five years. A man so good, and a name so great, and known to the youngest child that can comprehend our mother tongue, deserves more than a passing notice, and I will as briefly as possible sketch his life, works and character.[200]

He was a Nonconformist divine, born in Southampton in 1674, and educated by a Church clergyman. So apt was he to learn that he was soon proficient in Latin and Greek, and even in Hebrew. When only 16 years of age, he was placed under the care of the Rev. Thomas Rowe in London, and at the age of 20 had completed his educational course. He then elected to be a Nonconformist minister. For five years he was private tutor to the son of Sir John Hartopp, of Stoke Newington (connected with the Fleetwood family), and thus became acquainted with Sir Thomas Abney. At 24 he began to preach, being an assistant to the Rev. Dr. Chauncy. He remained with the doctor for some ten years, when an attack of fever so prostrated him, that he was obliged to give up his public work, and was kindly invited by Sir Thomas Abney to his house at Theobalds, where he remained till Sir Thos. Abney's death. He then removed with Lady Abney to her house in Stoke Newington, where he spent the remainder of his life. He died 25th Nov., 1748, at 75 years of age, and was buried in Bunhill Fields. Apart from his classical and poetical attainments, he was no mean painter, and specimens of his work were shown to visitors to the mansion, notably "Youth" and "Age," "Mirth" and "Grief," personified. Another room was under the hands of a professional artist, who had delineated a piece of water; during his temporary absence Dr. Watts painted a swan in the picture, and that remained as a notable object for visitors.

In 1836 it was found that Bunhill Fields, which had been so many years the "God's Acre" for Nonconformists of all classes, was filled to repletion, and with no possibility of further extension in what was then a crowded residential, as well as industrial locality, and it was then determined to seek ground more in the outskirts of the Metropolis. The Abney estate being then in the market (consisting of some thirty acres of land, chiefly meadow land, and bordered by the Hackney Brook), was purchased by a company, which was enrolled as the Abney Park Cemetery Company. I need not say that at that, not so far distant period, bricks and mortar were not so closely packed in the immediate neighbourhood as now. The ground was solemnly dedicated as a burial place by a religious service conducted by the Rev. Dr. Archer, on 20th May, 1840. He himself died on 30th November, 1864, and lies among the many worthy ones in the ministerial part of the grounds. The cemetery was evidently formed out of the grounds of Fleetwood House, as well as of Abney House, for at a spot, corresponding with the back of Fleetwood House, is a very fine old cedar tree, which must have been planted about the time of Oliver Cromwell. I would direct my readers' special attention to this tree, on account of a curious phenomenon. Some twelve feet up the trunk is to be seen the remains of a gardener's scythe. Dr. Robinson speaks of it in 1842, when he tells us "Many years ago a scythe was hung up in the fork of the tree, and was left there unnoticed and untouched for several years, till at length the body of the tree completely overgrew it, and enclosed the blade so fast, that it could not be removed. It is at this day to be seen (1820-42) the point of the blade on the one side, and the end on the other." I have visited the tree myself, and can just discern the double end which secured the blade to the stick. How strangely typical of the present surroundings—old Time—or Death with his relentless scythe.

Time and space would fail to tell me of the many I have known, who now lie buried in that hallowed spot; many with whom I have held sweet converse in the days gone by; ministers with whom I have associated, and whose ministerial efforts many have profited by; and friends no longer nigh. If I were to name one I should feel it unfair not to name at least five hundred, the increase of years brings us into contact with so many, and a tolerably active social life has added to the numbers. Of them I would thankfully say

Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours!
Jesus has vanquished death, and all its powers.

and for myself—

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still
Will lead me on
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till
The night is gone;
And with the morn those angel faces smile,
Which I have loved long since, and lost awhile.

Pardon this departure from the character of my chronicle. Those who have lost "the desire of the heart, and the delight of the eye" will doubtless forgive me, and I pass on—yet not without commendation of the cemetery authorities for the excellent way in which the tombs, graves, paths, and flower borders are maintained.[201]

Bouverie-road, at which we next arrive, is comparatively modern, and skirts the western boundary of the cemetery. It leads away northward to the Manor-road—formerly, one of the Green Lanes—and then we come to Park-street, a much older thoroughfare. A short way down, on the western side, are the Friends' (Quakers) Meeting House, almshouses, and their burying place—all severely simple, but very good. We then pass a row of shops, St. Mary's Mission-room, and the Amethyst Club, until we find a very narrow roadway passing into Lordship-road (an old and interesting thoroughfare), but the public-house, the "Red Lion," only separates this from the original, and evidently proper entrance to that road. The "Red Lion" is evidently one of the old hostels in Church-street, and my impression is that this first narrow way was, originally, the entry into the inn yard, as behind the inn are evidences of barn and stabling as found in all old country inns. And, as Lordship-road was probably the principal thoroughfare leading out into the country beyond, this inn yard had a direct exit into it, and this in time became a public thoroughfare, the wider roadway having been more recently made. We have then another row of shops, and the Vestry office, and come to another road, whose very name bespeaks its original purpose, Barn-street, and on this spot, and in this line of road frontage, once stood the barn and farmstead of the Manor House, and, as after passing nearly a dozen more shops we come to Edward's-lane, and then to the site of the old Manor House, which was probably erected in 1500, *temp.* Henry VII. and was pulled down, having become very dilapidated in 1695.[202]

In searching for some account of the surroundings of the old place, I find that there formerly stood an ancient summer-house facing the end of Queen Elizabeth's-walk, on which were to be seen the initials "E.A.G.," being those of Edward and Gertrude Allanson, who built the summer-house, and lived in a house to which it belonged; hence, perhaps, Edward's-lane. Prior to, and during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, a Mr. Dudley, a near relative of the Earl of Leicester, of Kenilworth notoriety, lived here for a while; and the Dudley Arms, with an earl's coronet, subsequently found in one of the houses afterwards built on its site, most probably were once affixed to the old mansion. Also an entry of the burial of a servant of the Countess of Essex, 24th October, 1682, in the parish register, points to the possible residence here of the Earl himself. There is also another interesting legend attached to the old place, namely, that during the reign of Queen Mary, her half-sister and successor, the Princess Elizabeth, was here in hiding, under the care of Mr. Dudley. It must be granted that the dates of these several events do not correspond, but that Elizabeth visited Mr. Dudley and his lady, when Queen, is well authenticated, and that on one occasion she presented a jewel of great value to their daughter, Miss Ann Dudley. And it is further averred that the Queen Elizabeth's-walk, at one time a beautiful country walk between two rows of fine elms, was so named from her. It crossed the " home-close," and was afterwards the field path to Hornsey.

But the old house boasted the occupancy by it of a still more noble man, the great Thomas Sutton, founder of the Charterhouse, who married Mr. Dudley's widow, and resided here until his removal to Hackney.[203]

Thanks to some most instructive interviews with E. J. Sage, Esq., an eminent local archæologist, I am enabled to give a still more perfect history of the occupants of the old Manor House. The Miss Ann Dudley became the wife of Sir Francis Popham, son of Sir John Popham, and they resided there. Their son Colonel Alexander Popham succeeded to the occupancy, after time a Mr. Upton and then a Mr. Dunstan, the last owner being one Timothy Matthews, citizen and grocer, who cleared away the remainder of the buildings, and let the site out, divided into several plots, on building lease.

CHAPTER XXVI.

(PAPERS IV., V., VI., VII.)

Before I go further into Stoke Newington, and tell more of its worthies, it may not be out of place to dwell for a moment on the striking differences perceptible in the number, character, and antiquity of the residents of our home parish, Hackney, and Stoke Newington. Some may have questioned the propriety of the very early start in the world's history in my introduction to old Hackney, and that I should have referred to geological remains, to the earliest history of our great city, once (most probably), the final resting-place of the fugitive Trojans (Homer's Troy), hence called "New Troy" or "Trinovant," then "Caer Lud" or "Lud's Town," and before its present name, London, its aboriginal British name, "Lin Din" or the "Town of the Lake," *i.e.*, the wide-spreading river Thames. Those who are old enough to have marked the course of our more recent British pioneers, when, as emigrants, they have entered on a new, and, to them, unknown land—as, for instance, in that island continent, Australia, or Van Diemen's Land, or New Zealand—must have noted that their first venture on a strange territory has been up a creek, or harbour, forming the mouth of some river from the interior, and by degrees have ventured on, farther and still farther, in the course of time, with the tide, but against the stream, until the very source of the river has become a township, and the interior of the country as well known as their native land. What obtains now is but a copy of the most ancient migrations, and hence, in one case, Hackney, situated as it is, within easy distance of the port of London, and skirting the river Lea, which I have already shown to have afforded easy access to the Danish Viking ships, and before them to the Imperial galleys of Rome, became of necessity a first place of resort after the establishment of London as a port and royal residence. Hence, the several noblemen and courtiers who in early English history were attached to the Normans, Plantagenets, and Lancastrians and Yorkists (then for the most part in the Tower of London,) found Hackney, as long inhabited, and in their day doubtless a well-ordered village, a suitable and safe residence in a quiet rusticity; affording a temporary resting-place amidst the turmoils of baronial and courtly life.

On the other hand Stoke Newington, with a history which carries us far back into the past, seems to have been, in its earlier times, more ecclesiastical than military, and along its streets and lanes no Knights Hospitallers, or of St. John-of-Jerusalem, passed in armour clad, and in their pomp of pride and power, except it might be, occasionally, in the retinue of some mighty Church potentate—say a Cardinal Wolsey—on a visit to the prebendary, whose estate and stall in St. Paul's Cathedral announced him, in those days, no mean Churchman. The stall in the Cathedral is the sixteenth, on the left side of the choir. The first prebendary was Wilwardus, the second Fulco Prior, J. Osyth, the third Walterus (dates not given). Then in 1132 was Gilbertus Foliot, the firm and fast friend of Henry II. in his dispute with Thomas à Beckett; after him John de Carland, William Comin, and Ranulf de Bisacia, in 1217-43. I cull from Robinson's History, and will in brief state that after these there were 38 more in due succession; the last, Thomas Briggs, collated in 1803, and still holding office in 1820. Several became bishops, thus reducing the time of their prebendaryship.

A pleasant half hour with the Rev. L. E. Shelford has enlightened me on sundry ecclesiastical matters, and it is but fair that my readers should share my knowledge. A prebendary is a canon; the warrant runs thus, prebendary or canon. The prebendary is the more ancient style, and the two titles may be regarded as convertible. A prebendary of St. Paul's (and I suppose in all other cathedrals alike) has the pulpit allotted to him on a given day, and, if he cannot occupy it, he must find a substitute. But what seems to an unlearned layman as a strange anomaly, is, that the Rector of Stoke Newington is not of neccesity the

Prebendary of the place. As, for instance, the Rev. Dr. Millington was Vicar of Kensington when he became Prebendary of Stoke Newington. Subsequently he became Rector of Stoke Newington also, *i.e.*, in 1805. The late Thomas Jackson (whose estimable parents were among our earliest and best family friends), predecessor of the present rector, was prebendary of Wedland, and the present rector is prebendary of Ealdland, each small estates in the county of Essex, and giving no stipend. The prebendary of Stoke Newington is the vicar of Enfield.

The following from the *Illustrated Church News* may prove interesting to my readers:—

> "An interesting fact, not generally known, perhaps, is that Her Majesty the Queen is ex-officio Prebendary of St. David's. Prebendary Victoria holds the first cursal prebend, and has a stall assigned to her in the choir, her tenure of which since 1837 makes her the senior prebendary of England."

Dr. Robinson gives a list of seventeen rectors, the first William de Grulling, 1366, the third Godfrey Becke, 1560-8, a not unfamiliar name in that parish (could the late estimable Mr. Beck trace his lineage back to that rector?) and ending with Samuel Ashby, appointed 1791, and the Rev. Dr. Gaskin, to whom his book is dedicated in 1820.

The history of Stoke Newington really dates back to Edward the Confessor, from whose liberality to the Church of his day the earliest part of its ecclesiastical possessions commence. Coming to later times, I find the following in Strype's last edition of Stow's London, A.D. 1720, and to it his initials J.S. are attached: "One ward of Hackney parish, lying north-west, is called Stoke Newington, and lies upon the great northern road; on the west side of which road is the parish of Stoke Newington, and Newington-green, pleasantly situated and full of fine country houses for citizens, being about three or four miles from London," &c., &c. My esteemed friend the rector traverses the above statement of the Rev. John Strype, but with a matter of some 173 years between, who shall decide between clerics who may be accounted equally trustworthy. While still on matters clerical, the following interesting fact may not be out of place here. I have referred to the late Colonel Gant as occupying a mansion, now pulled down, in Church-street. Here he dwelt for some ten years. During this time a young clergyman, the Rev. John Jackson, curate to the Rev. Mr. Harvey, rector of Hornsey, was the Sunday evening lecturer at old St. Mary's Church, and was almost a weekly guest at Colonel Gant's. The living of St. James', Piccadilly, falling vacant, the then premier (probably Lord Palmerston) offered it to Mr. Harvey; after a time for reflection he declined the preferment. Then, said the Premier (who was, I believe, an old schoolmate) "nominate a clergyman." He at once named his curate, who, after a trial sermon, was accepted. His subsequent popularity helped him to the See of Lincoln, and from thence he was translated to that of London. On two or three occasions I had personal friendly intercourse with him, and was much struck wtth his knowledge of our neighbourhood, especially when walking across Hackney Downs with him. The above facts, afterwards brought to my recollection, accounted for it. Where stood the old Manor House in Church-street now are seen a row of well-built houses, which extend from Edward's-lane to the old churchyard, and formerly called Church-row. They were built between 1695 and 1700, and much of the best of the materials from the old Manor House were used in their construction. As far as I can gather from past history, No. 168 was in 1750 the residence of a widow lady, a Mrs. Lardeau, who kept a boarding house, at which time John Howard, the great philanthropist, a bachelor and in bad health, came from his residence in Clapton to lodge there. His health so improved, thanks to the tender care and good nursing of Mrs. Lardeau, that although she was his senior by twenty-three years, he married her, and by his own testimony she proved to him as good a wife as she had been a nurse, but she died three years afterwards. In 1758 he married again, then living at Cardington, near Bedford, but his wife also died in 1765, leaving one child, a son. In my rambles in Hackney John Howard's name appears, and his benevolent life is of world-wide renown.

At the next house, No. 170, now the residence of Mr. E. W. Baxter, one of our Middlesex coroners, formerly resided the versatile author of "Curiosities of Literature" and many like works, "Isaac Disraeli," "the blind old man eloquent." His father, Benjamin Disraeli, came from Spain to London in 1748, made his fortune rapidly, then retired to Enfield, where he died in 1817, aged 90. Of Isaac, I will only quote Lord Byron's opinion—"that most entertaining and searching writer." He died here in 1848. His still greater son, the late much-lamented Benjamin Disraeli, Lord Beaconsfield, was, as his father's son, a boy in the same house, and the eldest son; he was born in 1805, and, for the most part, privately educated under his father's superintendence. He was articled to a lawyer, with an eye to a government office, obtained for him by his father. Then he contributed to a Tory paper (but short-lived), *The Representative.* In 1827, he published his first novel, "Vivian Gray," followed by other brilliant works of fiction. It need not be said that, although at one time inclined to Radicalism in politics, he was eminently constitutional. In 1837, he entered the House of Commons as a member for Maidstone. On his first, and maiden, speech, not understanding the fashion and temper of the House, he met with a rebuff, when, as he abruptly sat down, he gave forth the following prophetic utterance, "I have begun many things several times, and have often succeeded at last. I shall sit down now, but the time will come when you will hear me." Is there not here a ring of the old prophetic seers of his ancient race? On the death of Lord G. Bentinck, in 1848, he became the leader of the Protectionist party in the house. His subsequent history is ours. Raised to the House of Lords, August, 1876, with almost the entire consent of the nation, trusted in, and beloved by his sovereign, our gracious Queen, at whose house, "Hughenden Manor" she was a frequent visitor, Lord Beaconsfield at length passed away in the zenith of his fame, on the 19th April, 1881, a day which will be (perhaps, by generations yet unborn,) commemorated as "Primrose Day" after the simple flower (typical of his own simple life) he loved so well. He who engendered "peace with honour" now sleeps well. Looking at Lord Beaconsfield as a prominent figure in our political world, the estimate of a good man, and a man of moral power, by Oliver Goldsmith, is not inappropriate for one whose death called forth a national mourning, and whose lifework is now brought before us by an annual festival.

> "As some tall cliff that lifts its awful form,
> Swells from the vale, and midway leaves the storm;
> Though round its breast the rolling clouds are spread,
> Eternal sunshine settles on its head."

When it was suggested that I should cross the border, and write of Old Stoke Newington, I confessed my unfamiliarity with the village; my knowledge being really confined to visits to relatives and friends, whom I have already referred to, and whose houses, persons, and dwellings have nearly all passed away, so altered has the place become, even in 50 years.

But my feeble researches have been greatly aided by a deeply interesting "brochure," and as well got up as interesting ("The Story of Church Street, Stoke Newingtan," by Giltspur, a reprint from the *North London Guardian*), which has only just been put into my hands, and as I must correct my own errors from the more exact particulars in that work, it is but fair that I should herewith strongly recommend it to my readers, especially Stoke Newington folk, for the many curious and strange narrations therein, and, at the same time, assure the talented author that in my own ramblings in his parish I shall only give such information as is apparently common to us both.

Beyond them we find ourselves at Defoe-road. A well-built Assembly room occupies the site of part of the garden, and this end of the road the house where eccentric, but talented Daniel Defoe for some years resided. Defoe was the son of a butcher; born in London in 1663. He himself was a hosier, and came to Stoke Newington in 1710, having been educated at a celebrated school on Stoke Newington green. Although his father's name was only James Foe, he professed such a hatred for Englishmen that it is said, on that account, he wished to pass as a Frenchman by calling himself De Foe. However, his attachment to Protestantism was so great that he joined the insurrection under the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, and was fortunate himself to get back to London unnoticed. Politics were his forte, and at 21 he wrote a political pamphlet. He turned brick and tile maker, and became insolvent. Then he got himself a name by writing the "True-born Englishman," and espousing the cause of King William, who displaced, or rather succeeded, the fallen James II. Then for another pamphlet he was fined, imprisoned, and put in the pillory. This last he bore most undauntedly, and afterwards wrote "A Hymn to the pillory." Then, after all his punishments, he contrived to get into favour with Queen Anne, who sent money to his wife and family, and he was actually sent by the Government into Scotland, that, by his efforts, he might promote the then most desirable union with Scotland; and he afterwards wrote the history of the transaction in 1709, at which time we hear he was living in tranquility and comfort in Stoke Newington. It was after this he wrote "Robinson Crusoe," based on the actual adventures of Alexander Selkirk on the island of Juan Fernandez. He wrote many other works, especially on the Great Plague in London. He died the 26th April, 1731.[204]

Referring to John Wesley and old Jeffrey, I should name an interesting fact of the past. A large boys' school was kept by one Mr. Marton on Stoke Newington green. It was to this school Mr. Foe, the butcher, (then in business in Cripplegate), sent his son Daniel (*i.e.* Daniel Defoe), and one of his school-fellows was Samuel Wesley, subsequently Rector of Epworth, and father of John and Charles Wesley—while it is on record that another boy was named "Crusoe." Defoe doubtless had a good memory, and worked upon it, as here, without doubt, is the striking name of the hero of his literary effort in advanced life. Stoke Newington is no mean spot, for here at one or other of the houses of notable residents, came from time to time Howard, Hannah Moore, Wordsworth, Montgomerie, Charles Lamb, Sir Walter Scott, Rogers, and others whose names are enshrined in the rolls of literary fame. Just in the neighbourhood of Defoe-road is what was formerly a long footpath, known as "Cut Throat-lane," leading from Church-street to what is now St. Mathias's Church, and the Palatine estate—part of the old garden wall of Defoe's premises is to be found here—but the lane is now a good road known as "Oldfield-road." What are now two shops known as Nos. 109 and 111 is the divided residence of Thomas Day, of Sandford and Merton renown. It is certainly one of the oldest houses about here, I should think *temp.* William and Mary. Thomas Day, who resided here with his widowed mother for some time, was born in Well Close Square, Wapping, and his mother's father, a rich merchant, left him a fortune of £1,200 a year. He was called to the bar in 1778, but never practised as a barrister. He travelled a good deal, and eventually took a farm at Chertsey in Surrey. He was killed by a kick from a foal he was trying to break in—dying on the 8th September, in the 42nd year of his age. Then we pass Nos. 113 and 115—shops made out of another good dwelling house. Here lived the Rev. R. Barbauld, who was for four years the minister of the Unitarian Chapel on Newington-green, and here during his lifetime dwelt his talented wife also. But about 1806 his mental powers declined, and he was at last under medical care, and a keeper. Despite all, his malady increased, and after two years of maniacal suffering, he suddenly escaped from the house, and was found drowned in the New River—this was in 1808.

It was after this painful event that Mrs. Barbauld left, moving into her brother's house where she also died. Exactly opposite is a very old-fashioned house, known as St. Mary's Mission House, No. 106. Here dwelt Mrs. Barbauld's brother, the equally celebrated Dr. Aikin, known for his scientific researches and writings, and an able physician. He first settled in Yarmouth, then removed to Broad-street-buildings, London. In 1798 a stroke of paralysis compelled him to give up, and his son succeeded him. He retired to his house, opposite his sister's, and here he died in 1822. A few doors further on is what I described as most probably the opening to an old inn yard, since turned into a thoroughfare. Giltspur, doubtless for good reason, calls this lane "Red Lion-lane." I find it written up Lordship-road, and so it is named in the directory, the turning next to the tavern being the wider and better entrance into Lordship-road, although more modern, called in Lady Abney's map, 1734, Lordship-lane, and, from the title given to a field to the north of this part of Church-street, "Crooked-lane." The "Red Lion," formerly known as the "Greene Dragon," is certainly among the (at present) oldest taverns in the place; but, strange to say, Dr. Robinson never mentions it at all; the "Falcon," "Rose and Crown," and "Three Crowns" (not the original name, "Cock and Harp") are all that he alludes to. His edition before me is 1842, being a reprint from 1820. It may not have been the usual place for Vestry meetings, and therefore was unnoted; but the house itself and its immediate surroundings deserve some record. Immediately behind it, and in the triangle formed by the house itself (Nos. 114 and 116) and the two roads, stand the old cage (lock-up) and watch-house, also the engine-house, dating 1714, at which time stocks and a whipping-post were also added. Here also was the village "pound," on which a better engine-house was built in 1806. Over two doorways, now enclosed by a fence (as all the police arrangements are now in the High-road), are the dates cut in stone, 1806 and 1824; part of the premises are used as a mortuary. When and why the sign of the "Greene Dragon" was altered to the "Red Lion" is a question worthy of antiquarian search; perhaps Giltspur, or his antiquarian friend, Mr. Sage, may be able to enlighten us.

Still rambling westward, we come to the Vestry offices, 126, and the residences and surgery of two doctors. Here we are upon what was once holy ground, viz., the site of the original Abney Chapel and its graveyard.

A portion of the old red-tiled roofing may be seen over, and behind a low semi-detached surgery; the ground behind is occupied by the national school and its playground. I presume the graveyard is the playground for sanitary reasons. Here the Nonconformists of those days worshipped, and doubtless Dr. Watts from time to time preached. It was subsequently the Manor Room for general entertainments. Nearly opposite is another tavern the "Falcon" (mentioned by Dr. Robinson). Possibly as falconry is a very ancient sport, dating from Henry II., 1154, the tavern may be very old itself. I strolled down a narrow court, having no thoroughfare, and at the end a few miserable-looking cottages, but at the back of the inn, which has been newly fronted, is a very old gable-sided building, certainly belonging to Tudor times. Again crossing the street, there stands a long, low house of no mean pretentions originally (122 and 124). This must have been built in the time of the first George; a shop by its side seems to glory in its antiquity, being styled "Ye Olde Toye Shoppe." Then wandering on we come to Edward's-lane, and here I find from Giltspur that it was so called after Job Edwards, who was a Merchant Taylor, and had a good deal to do with the laying out and building the present Church-row, after the entire removal of the old Manor House. The house he occupied, perhaps built, is down the lane on the left hand side, and is as plain and ugly as one can conceive. At the corner of this lane, in Church-street, is the house once used for manorial courts and offices; it was afterwards bought for the residence of the minister at the old Abney Chapel, and subsequently occupied by the Rev. Dr. Barnsby, at whose school the remarkable Edgar Allan Poe was for five years. So brilliant in talent, and with such prospects, his fearful history deserves more than a passing notice "to point a moral," if not "to adorn a tale." He was born at Baltimore, U.S., in 1811. His parents were actors, but died while he was very young. A wealthy American merchant, Mr. Allan, being childless, adopted him; and he and his wife brought him with them to England, and placed him in this school in 1816.[205]

In 1822 he returned to America with them, where he was at school in Richmond, Virginia, and from thence entered the University of Charlotteville. His talents, early developed, were wonderful, but his profligacy developed too. He quarrelled with Mr. Allan because he objected to pay his most disgraceful debts. Then, trying to copy Lord Byron, he made for Greece, but somehow never got there, being found in St. Petersburgh drunk and disorderly, and committed to prison. By the good offices of the United States Minister he was released, and sent back to America. Good Mr. Allan forgave him. He then entered the Military Academy at West Point, but was cashiered within a year. After this, for a still more daring act of the basest profligacy, Mr. Allan gave him up entirely. Then he enlisted as a private soldier, and was bought off by some most injudicious friends. He next married a cousin, as good as she was beautiful (with all his faults his manners were most attractive and seductive), but she soon died broken-hearted. At this time one of his most exquisite poetical effusions, besides "Tamerlane" and other poems, was a lament on her death. Then he delivered lectures on "The Universe," all these efforts displaying extraordinary talent, and realising sufficient money to keep him living and drinking. After this he attempted "teetotalism," and was for several months sober, when, says his biographer, happening to visit Baltimore once more, he was waylaid by some of his "ancient cronies." On Sunday morning, 7th October, 1849, he was found dead drunk in a gutter, and died in hospital the same night, at the early age of 38. I have dwelt on this fearful picture at some length, because this lesson of a Stoke Newington schoolboy is intensely solemn, and may prove effective. To the partially reclaimed drunkard I would say, "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." To those "ancient cronies," be they habitual drunkards or gamblers, I would venture to say, "Beware! lest the blood of lost souls be found on the skirts of your garments."

At the corner of Albion-road, and opposite the spot I have just re-viewed, is another of the old inns of this village—the "Rose and Crown." Dr. Robinson gives a good engraving of the original building, the style of which is so like the "Red Lion," as it still stands, that I must ask my readers to take that as the "sampler." Over its small portico entrance is the date 1806, which must be rather that of the original drawing than of the erection of the house itself. It has, over a large dormer window, a medallion of the rose and crown, and a swinging signboard, to which are attached a pair of antlers. Doubtless when its foundations were laid, the deer of the forest of Middlesex were within easy distance. On the front is a notice-board with "Asses Milk," the medicinal virtues of which even then were recognised. While the sign itself, commemorating the union of the Houses of York and Lancaster, in the person of Edward IV. (brought about by our old rector, Christopher Urswicke) and the close of a fearful, and bloody Civil War, would give the date of its building from 1461 to 1483. The foundations of a much older building were found near by, aud all point to the fact that this was the oldest part of the village. The public-house was rebuilt in 1815, and it was for a while a place for the Vestry meeting. Albion-road is of modern date, and as "Giltspur" tells us, was made through the fields by Mr. Cubitt, the great builder, in 1830, as a carriage way to Stoke Newington-green.[206]

From thence to the new church we pass some fine old houses, dating, I should think, from the later Stuart period—say 1660—and one shop. My friend, Mr. Sage, tells me that this was originally one large mansion, consisting of a central building and two wings; the latter alone remain. The body of the mansion was probably burnt down, as it was certainly too good to be ruthlessly destroyed. One wing is still a private residence, the other is fronted by a shop. A few years ago we should have found the old Rectory House, chiefly built of wood, standing in its own grounds, and with a beautiful garden; and probably built by that great and good Lord of the Manor, William Patten, when the church was restored in 1563. It was pulled down, and the ground cleared prior to 1850, and on this enlarged site the new and cathedral-like church was erected, and was consecrated in 1858. The plans were by Sir George Gilbert Scott, and the church is considered one of his master-pieces; and his son, Mr. George Oldrid Scott, completed the beautiful spire in January, 1890. Behind the new church has been erected the commodious rectory, now occupied by the Rev. Prebendary Shelford, the present rector. Crossing the road we face a vastly different picture; behind us is a stately fane, a reminder of a cathedral city, or of the highest style of a fashionable resort—say St. Peter's, Bournemouth; before us just such a church, and a churchyard, as would have inspired a Gray to write his elegy—and regarding the character, and even tenets of many of the past generations, who now slumber beneath that turf, we may, without any literary distortion, quote his touching lines on their probable personalities :—

" Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast,
The little tyrant of his fields withstood ;
Some mute inglorious Milton, here may rest ;
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The church, with its rural surroundings, bespeaks peace within, and the character of the service, partaking more of the Low Church type, affords a striking, but not discordant, contrast to the more elaborate services over the way; I was startled, at first, by noticing fresh wooden hoarding around the south-eastern corner of the edifice, and dreaded lest I should find that iconoclastic spirit, which aforetimes worked such ruin in our old Hackney Parish, should have affected the ruling powers in this hamlet. However, the cause was soon explained. It would appear that a subsidence, betokened by sundry cracks in the walls at that corner of the old church, had taken place in foundations, that must have rested in quiet solidity about 200 years ; and the process of underpinning was going on, as the worthy church keeper said, owing to the wondrous drought of this past summer and autumn ; but added they have made a deep sewer down Church-street. (An essential requisite in an increasingly populous neighbourhood, but proving that there is no public benefit without a commensurate evil.) The age of the old church is lost ; no chronicle records its first erection, as Edward the Confessor (1042-66) was the first sovereign who is alleged to have conferred lands on which to establish a religious foundation, we may fairly conjecture that it may be from so early a day that this spot was appropriated as a " God's Acre." As " Giltspur," as a Stoke Newington man, has promised some more detailed accounts in the near future, I must leave such to him, only trusting that on behalf of my readers, and myself, he will fulfil his promise, and advise us of it.[207]

It was in 1563 that the above-named William Patten took the rebuilding, or thorough repairing, of the church in hand ; prior to that it was said to have been a small Gothic building of hewn stone, flint, and pebbles. Such is the description of the earliest known structure, but, I admit, we may look at it for many an hour before we can discover any confirmation of such a history, and even Patten's work stood for a long while—some 150 years—before the church again comes within the historian's notice. I may here state that Patten has left two mementoes

1563
AB ALTO.

of his work. First, a small square stone over the south door (*i.e.*, "from above"), which may have been the base of a sun-dial ; and, secondly, on a similar stone in the south wall beneath, the Patten Arms, *Prospice* (look before you), I presume his motto. In 1702 the south wall of the church was damaged by the great storm,* when it was repaired. Then, in 1716, requiring enlargement, it was nearly doubled in size by increasing the width 20 feet and the length 44 feet, on the north side of the churchyard. In 1723 the chancel was extended eastward by 10 feet by 25 feet. In 1806, again being under repair, the walls, excepting the north wall, which is of brick, were covered with Parker's cement, causing it to look like stone (destroying its ancient characteristics), and thought to have made the church look very neat. Did it ?

Within, the church has a quiet and antiquated appearance, and is in beautiful order ; the pews may be accounted stuffy, but they are not over high ; the chapel is marked off from the nave by octagonal pillars and arches ; and some stone pillars run from west to east along the nave, forming the most ancient part, probably the building as it existed prior to 1563. The additions towards the north are marked by a row of iron pillars, from which run iron girders northwards, supporting a gallery. There is a pretty organ of good quality in an organ loft, by the steeple. The east window is of stained glass, and now, for the most part, made up with the stained glass from other windows, which were dealt within during the latest repairs in 1841, when the final alterations were made by Sir Charles Barry, who did his best to bring back the structure of the church to what he considered to have been its original appearance. On this, and the re casting of the bells, £4,098 6s. 8d. were spent. Originally, the arms of Queen Elizabeth were in the centre, and four compartments, representing the Virgin Mary, the preaching of John the Baptist, the Purification, and the giving of alms. In the north window the Drapers' Arms, in the south the City of London. These are now fixed in the east window. On the south side of the chancel is an old doorway leading to the vestry. Among some framed portraits in the vestry hangs above all an old key, the original key of the church. It has been said this was once in the possession of, and was used by, Queen

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* Several churches and other buildings were wrecked by this fearful storm.

Elizabeth; I may add, if she really lived at the Manor House. The font, a most remarkable piece of church furniture on a strange-looking pediment, is under the tower. On the south of this is a small square chamber, with chimney and window; now connected with the heating apparatus. To the east of that is a vault, having a small barred window only, externally; the entrance is by steps under a square pew in the chapel. Here lie some of the Popham family. I noted in this chapel two neat windows, placed there by the congregation in memory of the late Mrs. Shelford. On the south wall, between the pulpit and vestry door, is the small, coloured, alabaster monument of John Dudley, Esq., his widow (afterwards Mrs. Sutton), and daughter. Affixed to the walls are monuments to the Frohocks, to the Taverners, to the Hartopps, and to a Mrs. Elizabeth Cooke, the last two having poetical additions to their epitaphs by Dr. Isaac Watts. One stone near the font covers the remains of one Ann Phipps, and another in the nave Mrs. Sophia Standerwick, died 1787, *ætat* 62, the granddaughter of Daniel Defoe. Of course, the churchyard has been closed against interments, and is, no doubt, full of the dead. Among them is a tomb to the late Mrs. Barbauld. On the east side of the path leading to the chapel lie the remains of Mrs. Stephen, wife of J. Stephen, Esq., Master in Chancery, and sister of William Wilberforce, M.P., the good and great promoter of the abolition of slavery, who himself wished to be buried here, but now lies in Westminster Abbey by national request.

Near Mrs. Barbauld's vault will be noted a yew tree, rather damaged by the overhanging boughs of surrounding trees, which certainly might be cut away to give fresh and vigorous growth to this noteworthy object. One John Farrington, who died in 1714, was buried in this spot, and left instructions that instead of a stone, a yew tree should be planted in the centre of his grave, and wished his friends to believe, or disbelieve, the existence of a supreme Being, as that should, or not, vegetate. He was thought to be an Atheist, but in his will he commends his soul to God, trusting for salvation through Christ. The flourishing growth of this yew tree, and its existence after 178 years, gives confirmatory evidence of his faith. With one other burial I must close this paper. On the east side of the churchyard is the tomb of William Pickett, of London, died 19th February, 1745, *ætat* 43, and, among others of his family, Elizabeth Pickett, spinster, who died December 11th, 1781, aged 23.

Also "This much lamented young person expired in consequence of her clothes taking fire the preceding evening. Reader, if you should ever witness such an afflicting scene, recollect that the only method to extinguish the flame is to stifle it by an immediate covering. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without our Heavenly Father." This, with some poetry, is all cut in the stone. The following is the co-temporary history of the event:—"Miss Pickett, who, on the 11th December, 1781, was ironing, and lifting up too high a box iron to receive the heater, the heater fell into her stays, and, before any assistance could be obtained, burnt her so dreadfully that she died next day in the greatest agony." She was granddaughter of the above William Pickett. Her father, William Pickett, was elected Alderman of Cornhill Ward in May, 1781.

Leaving old St. Mary's Church, I was about to pass along the fenced-in footpath dividing the churchyard, when the church-keeper directed my attention to the serious damage occasioned by the subsidence of the foundations at the south-eastern corner of the church, occasioning a wide fissure in the east wall of the vestry from roof to basement. He also pointed out an old well just without that corner of the edifice—it might be from twelve to twenty feet deep; there was water in it. I presume it was co-eval with the first recorded restoration of the church, and, doubtless, formed their only supply of water, although, for drinking purposes (if ever so used,) its position in a full churchyard would render its quality doubtful; but there may have been stronger stomachs in those days.- Passing through this winding path, I found before me the Clissold Park—that portion which is behind Clissold House—and bearing to the right, and then again to the left, was that old and interesting avenue, "Queen Elizabeth's Walk." "Avenue" it once was, but unless the authorities set to work before next spring, the few trees left, already old, gnarled, and dwarfed by decay, will only point out what has been, not what is. *Verbum sat sapienti.*

Skirting the eastern boarder of Clissold Park, it has the benefit of its tree border—at a trifling cost the rest might be made good. Then we come to Clissold House and Park. The house, on a bit of rising ground is a very plain building, erected by Jonathan Hoare, a banker, in 1790. I presume he was a Quaker, for the style is as unadorned as can be, in fact, Quaker-like (although none the worse for that). Dr. Robinson does not mention it, and, as it was only thirty years old when the first edition of his history came out it was probably not deemed worthy of notification. Giltspur tells us that the bricks of which it is built were home-made. In 1804, Mr. Thomas Gudgeon owned it, from whom it was soon after purchased by a Mr. Crawshay, who lived there with his wife and two daughters. Then a curate at the adjoining church, the Rev. Augustus Clissold, fell in love with one of the daughters. The old man hated parsons, and would have none of it. But life is sometimes short, and love may be long, and so it fell out—the irascible father died, and the parson married the daughter—so, as in this particular instance, "All's well that ends well." Entering into possession of the estate, the Rev. A. Clissold altered the name from Crawshay's Farm to Clissold's Place or Park, and lived to a good old age, dying away from Stoke Newington (I think at Tunbridge Wells) only a few years ago. Then the property came back to the Crawshay family—they could do nothing with it—and, giving notice to let some twenty acres of land belonging to them absolutely, for building purposes, stirred up the spirit of the surrounding inhabitants, who, under the leadership of Messrs. Joseph Beck and John Runtz, backed eventually by the London County Council and the parish of Hackney, the whole of the land was secured, and now, as Clissold Park, is dedicated to the public for ever. The two lakes, and the gentle winding of the New River, somewhat widened in front of the house, add much to the beauty of the spot; and timber, of more than a century's growth, adds to its charms. The leading spirit in this admirable act has passed away. Adopting the inscription in St. Paul's Cathedral to the memory of Sir Christopher Wren, I should say of the late Joseph Beck—"*Si monumentum requiris? circumspice!!*"

Church-street runs on by way of Park-crescent (where was once the parish pump) and Paradise-row into the Green Lanes; houses being only on the left, but none of special interest. Turning to the left we, by degrees, passing here and there old houses and former pleasure-garden resorts, come into Stoke Newington Green. Three-fourths of this plot belongs to Islington, the north side only being within our parish boundaries. Old history tells us that on the north-west corner of the green an old house once stood, built of wood and lath and plaster. It was called Bishop's Place, and had been divided into tenements, occupied by the very poor. When pulled down, the old wainscot was found to be richly gilt, and here and there were remains of paintings. Tradition pointed to this house as once frequented by Henry VIII. with no good design. The names of King Henry's-road and walk give ground to the tradition.* Then, from a house on the Green, the Earl of Northumberland penned his celebrated letter, exculpating the hapless Queen Ann Boleyn and himself from charges which that despicable King sought to fasten on them; dying soon after in our parish. On the north side, and in Stoke Newington, is the celebrated Unitarian meeting-house, built (so the inscription tells us) in 1708. Behind it are a few old dwellings which seem to be in the course of demolition. New and handsome buildings are now found on our side of the green, and the Albion-road, much widened and improved, still following the course of the old footpath through the fields, from the green to the old church, forms but a scant reminder of the days of our forefathers, and the times when Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Queens Mary and Elizabeth in succession reigned over us.

My peregrinations with a literary object are over, and to my readers who have so kindly and favourably regarded these hurried sketches, I tender my warmest thanks. Neither of our now most populous villages is as it once was; much of their beauty and their picturesque surroundings have passed away for ever. Houses and manufactories have taken their place. The miles on miles of roadways, the tram-lines, and still more the railways, have crossed and cut up our meadows and field walks, and the smoke of the metropolis has smirched our trees, our shrubs, and flowers; and while I cannot myself see in the dim vista of the ages the New Zealander sitting on the ruins of London Bridge, and therefrom calmly contemplating the fallen fortunes of our City and its suburbs, I may subscribe to the almost inspired language of our wondrous seer, old Shakespeare, that—

> Like the baseless fabric of a vision,
> The cloud-capped towers, the gorgeous palaces,
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself.
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like an insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind.

[The End.]

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* Mr. Sage has an interesting drawing of this old house, taken some one hundred years ago—but even then it looks much dilapidated.

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

Our earliest British writers of history always went back as far as they could in the annals of the past, although their own records might be up to date. Thus that wonderful old chronicler "Geoffery, of Monmouth" tells us that Brutus, nephew of Æneas, became King of Britain, being co-eval with Eli, in the times of the Judges over Israel. Second from him was "Lochrin," in whose time Samuel governed Israel and Homer lived. "Leil," another King, was contemporary with Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Next to him reigned "Lud Hudibras," in the time when Haggai, Amos and Joel were prophets in Israel. He built Canterbury, Winchester and Salisbury—also (some say) gave his name to London, as "Lud's Town," and certainly to "Lud" gate, and it was his son "Bladud" who reigned in Britain at the time co-eval with the ministrations in Israel of the mighty prophets Elijah and Elisha. Old Geoffrey was pre-eminently a Bible student.

No. 2.

In my perambulation through Mare-street I omitted to notice one of the few remaining old houses in that locality, obscured as it now is, and has been for at least some seventy years, by an extensive shop front—and by the kind permission of Messrs. Branscombe and Sons I had the opportunity of going over it a few days ago. When first known to me—that is as far as memory serves—it was in the occupation of Messrs. Statterie and Green, linen drapers of good renown. Originally it must have been a substantial dwelling house, but without a history. In Rocque's map in 1745, a building is marked close to the banks of the Brook, having a good frontage on the west side of the street (then Church-street) and one wing at the southern end facing, what may have been an entry to a courtyard. Its age might be from about 1600—not earlier. Running up the centre of the building is a most substantial oaken staircase, with heavily carved banister and rails, leading one at last into a perfect labyrinth of oaken beams and stays, in a partially dormered roof divided into several apartments as attics. Even on the first floor the rooms—one only 8 feet 7 inches, another only 10 feet high—are intermingled with curious and contracted passages. Of its sound and substantial qualities there can be no question, for abutting, as it does, so closely upon the North London Railway, that trains as they pass along would seem as if they would run into the building, yet the vibration is comparatively slight; but as to style of architecture, etc., etc., no architect's brain was ever taxed in effecting adornments of the least kind; some modern architect however has, by a new front, considerably lessened its painful plainness, but enough remains to show how, amongst picturesque surroundings, a thoroughly ugly exterior must have appeared. **208**

No. 3.

HACKNEY OLD CHURCHYARD AS AN OPEN SPACE.

From the *Hackney Mercury*, December 2nd, 1893.

As is no doubt well-known to most of my fellow parishioners, a great and important change has been determined upon in the Old Churchyard; the faculty necessary to effect it, and the provision of men and money to accomplish the design have been the work of the last few months, at any rate since I ventured to come before the reading public with my old time sketches. As, however, the scheme so seriously deals with a portion of my favourite "hunting ground" its history ought to occupy a place in these pages. Notice was fully given, but to it small attention seems to have been paid, and hence the earliest stages in the necessary alterations have been subject to most hostile criticism. The scheme, as far as I can gather, is, the churchyard having been finally closed against all interments, and being in a most dilapidated condition as to tombs and gravestones; many of them belonging to families who have either left Hackney altogether or died out, and there being no monies for reinstating the same, and preserving them when reinstated, a faculty was applied for and granted (leaving only the old Town Hall an open question, and taking steps to deal with the private interests vested in the Rowe Chapel and the Old Tower) to the committee for taking over and maintaining public open spaces, to be secured for the benefit of the public for ever. Action at this moment has proved advantageous, as giving immediate employment to the many who are just now out of work, and the staff from the Town Hall are carrying out their important duties reverently and efficiently, and in a way and manner which must silence all who question this apparent disturbance of the dead, and violent entry on "God's Acre." These changes necessitated a certain amount of levelling the ground surface, and lowering the upper strata of the vaults and graves without the slightest disturbance of the dead and their remains, which for centuries had rested there. Whatever may be our views on the subject, all must admit that a well-kept cemetery, even if a spot for sober recreation, is better than a desolate churchyard with crumbling altar-tombs, and headstones all awry, intermingled with unkempt grass, and weeds and nettles. It may not be generally known, and I failed to name it, that on the removal of the Old Church House, which, with a small courtyard, occupied the ground on which the Old Town Hall now stands, and that small courtyard running northward across the present road entry to the Rectory, was by deed arranged, that on the building of the present Rectory, so much of the ground formerly occupied north-west of the Old Tower should be added to the churchyard for vaults, the license being given to the Rev. Peter Newcome, the then vicar. The ground so taken measured 54 feet 9 inches from north to south, and 36 feet 6 inches from east to west. This deed bears date 6 May, 1706. Vaults were made accordingly, and in bringing down the levels of such as impinged upon the churchyard wall, from the Rectory entry to the Town Hall, a very large vault was discovered, without altar-stone or epitaph. It went from west to east parallel with, and close to the Rectory entry wall, measuring 8 feet by 24 feet; the plates on two of the coffins which were legible were "Sir S. Heathcote," and "Lady Drake." Dr. Robinson tells us a Samuel Heathcote was buried in 1708, and his daughter Lady Anne Drake on the 5th November, 1768. Strype, in Stow's London, stated that Sir Gilbert Heathcote was Lord Mayor of London in 1711, one of the Sheriffs for the same year being our Sir John Cass. I cannot resist copying the following entry, whence it was obtained I know not :—"Anthony, a poore ould negro, aged 105 years, was buried the 18th May, 1630." There is also a Mary Wood, buried 2nd June, 1796, aged 104.

Few can have passed through the old churchyard without noting the only obelisk in it, as a monument, close to the Rectory garden wall. On three sides of its very beautiful pedestal are "Armorial Bearings," which are considered to belong to the family of Foster or Forster, of Bamborough, motto "*Si fractus fortis*," and it is conjectured that it belonged to a branch of the family of General Forster, who commanded the English rebels, in conjunction with Lord Derwentwater, in 1715. Lysons in his "Environs of London" thus writes :—"Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas Foster (1727)" was on this obelisk. In his time the date only was legible—now all has disappeared. The necessity of securing this vault, with the alteration, owing to the shifting of the entrance slab, afforded the opportunity of which the authorities engaged at the work availed themselves, and with them I examined the contents of the vault, before it was made good and thoroughly secured. The coffins, most parts lead, and much perished, were in the utmost confusion as if some earthquake, many years ago, had shaken them entirely out of position. There appeared to have been *four* interments, but the coffin-plates of the two most recent were alone decipherable, and were as follows :—"Mrs. Mary Davison, died 5th October, 1753, aged 50," "Mrs. Mary Wood, died 2nd May, 1801, aged 72" (this 92 years ago). These were the last two burials. Were they Fosters when single? their Christian names were not Elizabeth. Close by was the headstone of some of the Bode family. My readers may remember my naming the Baroness de Bode, as a Dalston resident, and George II.; their several Christian names such as "George," "Augustus," "Ernest," etc., etc., seemed strongly confirmatory of a royal alliance.

In Simpson's Book I find the following among the Vestry Minutes, June 1st, 1741, Mrs. Elizabeth Carter applies for the pew over "the parish vault," and offers, at her own cost, to break a doorway out of the church, through the wall; and the Vestry granted it, provided she obtained a faculty, and so laid the floor of the pew that a corpse might be readily put down into the vault under it. It was absolutely necessary to lower this vault, and it was therefore opened in our joint presence. To our surprise the coffins, or what remained of them (for they must have been of wood only), had so perished, and sunk down, that they were at least from eight to twelve feet from the surface. How such an arrangement in an open vault, and under a Church floor could be endured seems strange.

The Rev. J. W. Kenworthy, formerly one of our curates, has given us most interesting particulars about our old churchyard. After referring to those raised tombs and slabs, which mark out the floor and foundations of the old church, he refers to the fact that headstones in the open ground are of comparatively recent date. All inscribed stones placed within the church. The earliest date of the present custom is in 1626 at Farnham, and he says in our churchyard 1705; and these older stones are very low, but some of them most elaborately carved, in fact there are some now placed against the Rectory garden wall, which are really very fine specimens of the sculptor's art—cherubs trumpets, skulls, etc., etc., show what pains were taken in this sepulchral work. One is especially noteworthy, that of a mason who died in 1777. Before this date interments in the open ground were unmarked; hence the quantity of bones thrown out in any old churchyard, and part of it, when digging for grave or vault.

I have paid a solitary visit, since my last notes were taken, to the spot, and from the side of the parish vault, now lowered and carefully filled in, examined a portion of the foundations of the old church now laid bare. Composed of rubble and large flint stones, they look as able to have carried another super-structure as by ocular demonstration does the old Tower itself; and one can only regret that the short-sightedness of our forefathers did not permit them to act as the parishioners of Stoke Newington have done, viz., retain the old Church while building a new one; whether as a Chapel of Ease or still as the Parish Church, it would have rendered efficient service for generations yet to come; and possibly have saved the cost of forming a new district such as St. Luke's, and the erection of another church. However it has gone and can only be ideally re-called. Our surveyor, Mr. Lovegrove, has kindly promised to put down such markers in stone as will indicate the size, shape and extent of the church, which for so many years stood there. Before I close I may state, on the authority of the Rev. J. W. Kenworthy, that the chancel, as it recently appeared surrounded by a railing, is at its original level, while the nave and the aisles have been considerably raised.

F.R.C.S.

FOOTNOTES

Chapter 1

1. The circumstances of this find are described in more detail in The Archaeology of Hackney by Graham Black, Inner London Archaeological Unit, c.1977.

2. The sarcophagus was discovered in September 1867. Clarke gave a paper to the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society. See note 16 to Introduction.

3. It is believed that a Roman road did not cross the Lea, but its course is more likely to have been along Homerton High Street. The problem is discussed in Black op.cit. (vol.unpaginated).

Chapter 2

4. One of these coffins is now in the garden of Vestry House Museum, Vestry Road, London, E17.

5. The cleared land is now a recreation ground maintained by the London Borough of Hackney. It was once called Piggies Island - see p.240.

6. The dock leading from the canal was the Haggerston Basin. This has now been filled in.

7. Spurstowe's Almhouses were latterly nos 1-11 Sylvester Path. They were demolished in 1966.

Chapter 3

8. Morley Hall stood on the site of the present Hackney Technical College, Triangle House. The Roman Catholic church has now been rebuilt.

9. Laud Kennett's shop/The Green Man was on the site of the present no 300 Mare Street.

10. The Congregational Church was the Cambridge Heath Congregational Church which stood at the corner of Mare Street and the former Cambridge Villas, opposite Beck Road.

11. The Flying Horse was no.149 Mare Street, on the corner with Exmouth Place, a turning just north of Warburton Road. The Baptist Chapel, known as the Mare Street Baptist Chapel was on the corner of Helmsley Street and Mare Street. It was bombed in the Second World War and later demolished.

12. Some memoirs of the life of Thomas Tryon late of London, merchant by himself , 1705, is in the H.A.D. local collection. The work is mostly concerned with matters of the spirit and there is no mention of Hackney. The modern Shore Place was built after Clarke's time - see Street Name Concordance.

13. 'Short wide street leading to Helmsley Street' i.e. the portion of the present Tudor Road from the junction of Tudor Grove to Mare Street.

14. Most kinds of forgery, including that described by Clarke, ceased to be capital offences in July 1837. According to the author of Our Local Sketches the offender was one Austin, an employee of the Bank of England, who was hanged in 1820. See also p.103.

Chapter 4

15. This is now the Lansdowne Club, no.195 Mare Street.

16. Clarke is describing his own memories of the passing of the Reform Act: the chemist's shop was his father's. See Introduction.

17. Lady Holles School is now part of Cordwainers' College. The Catholic Apostolic Church is now the Greek Orthodox Church of St John the Theologian.

18. St Thomas's Square Chapel closed in 1896 and been converted into a cinema by 1913. The present building is now a bingo hall.

19. Willmott's house was no.9. West Street (now Westgate Street and had been demolished by 1913).

20. Reed's houses would appear to have gone by 1913.

21. The lunatic asylum may have been at no.201 Mare Street which in 1872 was Tre-Wint Industrial Home (an orphanage).

22. The Nags Head was on the west side of Mare Street just south of the junction with London Lane, standing back from the road in its own courtyard. R.Simpson was the author of Some notices of the life of Henry, Lord Percy, 6th Earl of Northumberland and of the parish church of St Augustine, afterwards St John at Hackney, 1882, Some account of monuments in St John's Church , 1881 and Memorials of St John at Hackney Part III, 1882. These were collected together as Memorials of St John at Hackney . Copies are in the H.A.D. local collection.

23. H.A.D. M3958 A few lines regarding the parish of Hackney , which is in the main a commentary by an anonymous local man on Robinson's history of Hackney, suggests that Loddiges did not move from his London Lane house until 1775-76 and bought out Busch in 1787.

24. The Horse and Groom was at no.225 Mare Street. The narrow lane after St Thomas Square was Burford Lane which led into Lyme Grove. Later renamed as part of Lyme Grove, it is now part of the site of a block of flats. Edwin Fox and Bousfield were auctioneers, land, estate and house agents, and surveyors, whose head offices in 1893 were no.99 Gresham Street, City of London.

25. Trinity Congregational Chapel formerly stood at the junction of Brenthouse and Frampton Park Roads, on the north west corner.

26. Hackney Central Conservative Club was at no.206 Mare Street in 1892.

27. The 7th Battalion Essex Regiment's headquarters were at no.208 Mare Street in 1892.

28. Paine & Wilson were still in business in 1872.

Chapter 5

29. No.1 Spackman's Buildings was Clarke's own house from 1850 to 1863. See Introduction.

30. Childs Forge was demolished for the construction of the present Mare Street Library, which opened in 1908.

Chapter 6

31. Tyer and Company's works were on the site of the present nos 10-16 Ashwin Street. Tyer's were the inventors of the tablet system of working in use subsequently on many single track lines. The demonstration that Clarke refers to was in his own dining room.

32. Mr King's shop was on the site of no.240 Mare Street.

33. Musgrove had moved to Lower Clapton by 1843 but the firm of Musgrove & Gadsden would appear to have left Hackney by 1851. See also p.110.

34. Pigwell Field path is marked as 'Willow Walk' on the Hackney Parish map of 1831.

35. The Old Gravel Pit Chapel was later altered for factory use. Recent demolition has provided a clear view of the premises from Morning Lane, and in 1985 a blue placque to commemorate Joseph Priestley's ministry was added to the buildings.

36. The Black & White House was on the site of the later Tramway Depot, which is now Clapton Bus Garage. The watercress beds were on the site of the present Chalgrove Road car park.

36a. The murder took place in 1847. An account of the crime and trial of the grandson, William Allnut, is in the H.A.D. local collection.

Chapter 7

37. The name origin of Grumbolds is not known, it may relate to a medieval lord of the manor. For Black & White House see footnote 36.

38. The Beehive, later Dennis' shop was no.352 Mare Street.

39. There are a series of plans and elevations of the old church in H.A.D. V174-183.

40. Strictly speaking the Rowe Chapel was a monument rather that a place of Worship. It gradually deteriorated and had been condemned as unsafe and demolished by 1913. See also p.64 ff.

41. 'A zealous & intelligent archaeologist' : William Page Ivatts, 5 Groombridge Road, South Hackney. (1890, Kelly's Hackney, Homerton etc. Directory.)

Chapter 8

42. For Spurstowe's Almshouses see also footnote 7 & p.16.

43. Watercolours of this conduit are in H.A.D. WP 4446 and 4459.

Chapter 9

44. 'Lord Amherst ...' William Archer, 3rd Earl Amherst, J.P. (d. 1910).

45. The evidence as to André's birthplace is inconclusive. Florence Bagust believed that the family home was Beecholme House which stood almost opposite Brooke House until it was demolished in 1878-80 and Beecholme Road built on the site. Both J.R.Daniel Tyssen in 1848 and Arthur Bowers a few years later stated that André or his relations lived at Beecholme but gave no corroborating evidence and only Clarke states André was born there.
See H.A.D. Bagust Vol 9 p.36.

Chapter 10

46. For a later description of St John's Church see F.C. Heward's St John at Hackney , SPCK, 1935 (Copies in H.A.D. local collection). A contemporary guide is issued by the church.

Chapter 11

47. The records of Bishop Woods Almshouses are at the Greater London Record Office Ref p.79/JN1/292-293,329,333-334,348-352 and 357-362.

48. The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes was 1685.

49. Ram's Episcopal Chapel was on the north side of Homerton High Street between Nos 13&17. See also p.140-141.

50. 'Vouchers ... in Lambeth Library'. These are the papers of the Westminster Association for the Relief of Sufferers in the Wars in Germany 1814-1816' and are Lambeth Palace Library Ms 1789 folios 3-96. Joshua Watson's house had been Joseph Priestley's home during his time in Clapton 1791-94. See Joseph Priestley in Clapton 1791-94 by Michael Gray in East London Record, No 6, 1983, pp32-38.

Chapter 12

51. For Colonel Beaufoy see Chapter 17 and footnotes.

52. Robert Voss lived at no.26 Clapton Square.

53. For the forgery by the bank clerk see also p.26 and footnote 14.

54. The Five Houses were built on the estate of the former Hackney House and stood back from the east side of Lower Clapton Road between the junction with Urswick Road and Powerscroft Road. The term was used as a geographical description of that area of Lower Clapton and applied especially to one of the houses, owned by the Berger family.

55. The 'whipping post' is now displayed in the grounds of St John's Church, Hackney, facing the road.

56. The Old Mermaid Tavern was no 364 Mare Street and ceased to be a public house about 1966 though it continues in use as a shop. John Coventry, a printer, occupied No.400 Mare Street.

Chapter 13

57. The only upholsterer listed in local directories on Mare Street at the time was no.248, which would be further to the south than the part of the street described.

58. For the Templar's House see also Robinson Vol.1 p.77.

59. 'Indentified' - identified.

60. If Clarke did sing in the auction room he could have been no more than seven at the time, if as he states on p.110, the Blue Posts was demolished between 1825-7. No mention of records of this choral society were found when these notes were compiled.

61. Nelme's fields on the west side of Mare Street where the North London Railway and Graham Road now run westwards.

62. The site of Matthew Rose's store is now Marks and Spencers. The butcher's business at no.363 Mare Street was kept by S.Winkley in 1872. Messrs G.Hill, tailor, S.Monk, undertaker, & J.Axtens, draper were nos.367-373 Mare Street.

63. The Assembly Rooms were at the rear of the Manor House approximately between Brett Road and Gould Terrace. They had been demolished by 1894. The gardens are now covered by these two roads.

64. The drawing and prints of Sadler's balloon ascent are in H.A.D visual collection. Sadler also joined forces with Mark Beaufoy and made an ascent from Hackney Wick. A log of the journey is in H.A.D. local collection.

65. Some records of the Hackney Literary Institute are in H.A.D local collection.

66. The references in Robinson to John Ward are Vol.1 p.22, 122-126, 246 and Vol.2, p.56.

67. Boyd and Varty last appear in a directory in 1847, which suggests that Ward's house was demolished c.1848. The junction with Dalston Lane was still known as Ward's corner in the 1870s.

Chapter 14

68. The site of the Prince of Wales tavern on the corner of Clarence Road and Dalston Lane is now an open space in front of a block of flats. Prospect House was not on Church Street but on the west side of Lower Clapton Road to the south of the present Goulton Road. a tailor's shop adjoined this. However it has not been possible to trace the course of the footpath Clarke describes.

69. The rebuilt public house is the Elephant's Head, Lower Clapton. Robert Voss lived at no.26 Clapton Square. See also p.102.

70. Ashpital was the surveyor responsible for the 1831 map of Hackney Parish cited above. His house is now the site of nos 8-24 St John's Mansions. For Watson's house see also p.97 and footnote 50. The house occupied by a medical practioner was that of John Hemingway, Salisbury House, in 1894. Its site is now nos.1-8 St John's Mansions.

71. These and other illustrations of Ward's House are in H.A.D. visual colection.

72. For the Five Houses see also footnote 54. Bond Hopkin's house was Hackney House, see below.

73. A plan of Stamp Brooksbank's garden c.1745 is H.A.D. V 23. The collection also includes a sale plan showing the estate in 1775 (V 31) and Berger's estate, with illustrations of his house and the Priory in the corner of the plan (V 20). The estate was developed by the London and Surburban Land and Building Company in about 1860 when the Clapton Park Estate was laid out on the land. College House was on the site of the present nos 17-19 Tresham Walk.

74. Clarke's suggestion regarding the tunnels cannot be proved. It is more likely that they were part of the estate drainage system. A plan of College House c.1883, is H.A.D. V 73. The matter is also covered by Florence Bagust Vol.9 pp 7,15 and 30.

75. P.129, 1.5 should read 'in fact, one would be disposed to assign this, as the proper and original name'.

76. The Marshgate stood on the south side of the present Homerton Road at the junction with Marsh Hill. The Victoria Park Station Clarke refers to was on the Bow line of the North London Railway, with an entrance on Cadogan Terrace. Its modern successor is on the Stratford line to the north . Berger's factory, founded in 1760 was on a site bounded by Morning Lane to the west, the modern Berger Road to the south east, the railway to the north and Shepherd's Lane to the east. A history of the firm 150 years of the House of Berger 1750-1910 , is in H.A.D. local collection. The White Lion Tavern, at the corner of Wick Road formerly had extensive pleasure grounds where, under J.Baum, fights and athletic events were staged in the 1860s. See also pp. 160-161.

77. 'Rainault' should be Hainault.

Chapter 15

78. James Lovegrove A.M.I.C.E. lived at Urswick Road. The Truant School is now Upton House School.

79. The Proprietary Grammar School site in now covered by nos 23-25 Sutton Place. See Introduction. The Madras system of education was a 'teacher-pupil' one originated by Dr Andrew Bell in Madras, India. It was based on the idea that the teachers selected monitors from pupils who, once taught, could pass on instruction to alloted groups of pupils. It thus allowed teachers to deal with very large classes.

80. This is Sutton House, portions of which date from the 16th century. It is now the property of the National Trust. A short history of the house The Old House on the Corner published by W.H.Smith in 1906 in H.A.D. locval collection.

81. John Dudley, a rich brewer, leased the manor of Stoke Newington from St Paul's Cathedral in 1569. He died in 1580 (VCH Inner London Middlesex Vol VIII p.177).

82. The origin of the name 'Alderman's Walk' remains unknown. The old houses in Homerton Row stood on the north side of the present Homerton Row between the junction with Homerton High Street and Churchill Walk. A photograph of the houses in the course of demolition in 1880 appears in A Second Look : a photographic record of a walk through Hackney in the 1890s and today (Centerprise, 1975) p.13. The City of London Union branch workhouse later became the Eastern Hospital. Homerton Hospital now occupies the site.

83. Eagle House was on the corner of Homerton High Street and Homerton Row and was not demolished until after the Second World War. A photograph appears in A Second Look (op.cit) p.15. Miss Marion Sedgwick's house was no.17 Homerton High Street. Miss Sedgwick died in 1860, by 1872 it was used as a pawnbroker's. The site is now a factory. Dr Hayman's house was on the site which is now part of Marion Court.

84. A short history of Ram's Chapel was published as part of an appeal for funds c.1924. H.A.D. M 3955, the recollections of the Chapel by Elizabeth K.Parkard, a minister's daughter, covers the years 1883 to 1891. It is an especially lively account of the workings of the Chapel after the death of Prebendary Griffith and is even less complimentary than Clarkes on its architecture, describing it as looking like 'a small brewery' ! Minutes of the Trustees of the Chapel 1847-1936 are in H.A.D. D/E 211 RAM 1.

85. The site of Ram's house and his Chapel are now covered by the grounds of Upton House School.

Chapter 16

86. For Miss Sedgwick's house see p.140 and footnote 83. The Plough Inn and the other parts of the building covered land between Homerton Row and Shepherd's Lane on Homerton High Street. There are photographs of the buildings in H.A.D. visual collection.

87. Hackney formed part of the medieval manor of Stepney, which was held by the Bishopric of London from c.604 - 1550. There was a separate beadle appointed for Hackney but there is no evidence to support Clarke's supposition that the Homerton buildings were ever a manorial residence, let alone a bishop's palace. Homerton was a suitable neighbourhood for gentlemen to have houses in the late 15th and 16th centuries and it is more likely that the buildings which included the Plough were just such a house. For the Hackney link with the Bishopric of London see Estates of the Bishopric of London from the 7th to early 16th centuries P.J.Taylor, unpublished thesis for the University of London, 1976 (copy in H.A.D. local collection).

88. The Lamb and Flag was no.69 Homerton High Street.

89. The Coach and Horses was no.80 Homerton High Street. Caleb Turner's 1843 directory lists Hawkin's stage coaches as leaving Homerton and going via Well Street to the City every two hours at quarter past each hour from 9.15 am to 9.15 pm. Places could be booked at Rush's the hairdressers next to the Lamb and Flag. In 1847 at 8.15 and 9.15 am services ran to the Royal Exchange with later services going to the West End. Coach services from Homerton ceased with the opening of the North London Railway in 1850. The 'remarkable old house on the right side' now forms part of the site of Marion Court.

90. No photographs of this plaque have survived.

91. This hypothesis of Clarke's has no foundation. A John Howard, carpenter, leased tenements in Homerton near Ram's Chapel in 1758 and this may have given rise to the story (H.A.D. M1055).

92. Homerton College had moved from Hackney by 1893 and the premises were in use as a Residential School for the Deaf by 1913. For a history of Homerton

College see: Homerton College c.1695-1978 by T.H.Sims (The College 1979), copy in H.A.D. local collection.

Chapter 16 (Cont)

93. The East London Waterworks premises were on the south side of Lea Bridge. Extant premises are now owned by Thames Water Authority. The gardens of the two houses were still intact in 1868 but were later built over.

94. These hospitals were later to become the Eastern Hospital whose site is now part of the new Homerton Hospital.

95. There is some confusion on Clarke's part here. The wall of the Priory grounds would have been on the left coming up from Brooksby's Walk. The path, which can be traced on the Hackney Parish Map of 1831, ran to the junction of the present Chatsworth Road, then turned west along Clifden Road and then north again, parallel with the line of the present Elderfield Road. The London Orphan Asylum stood at the end of Linscott Road, only the entrance columns now remain.

96. The White House Fishery was in the bend of the River Lea on the east side by the present Ferry Bridge. It had been demolished by 1936.

97. The Mount House was on the north side of Marsh Hill and its site is now nos25-47 Marsh Hill. Symington House may have been the property leased to a Mr Benjamin Adams for 1815-40. His account book is H.A.D. D/F/ADM/1.

Chapter 17

98. These panels are no longer in the vicarage and their present whereabouts are unknown. However the bay windows and decorative ceiling remain.

99. The schools built in Berger Road are now Berger Primary School.

100. For a later history of St Barnabas see F.C.Heward Homerton, it history and its church (1925). Copy in H.A.D. local collection.

101. Hackney Union Workhouse was the later Hackney Hospital. It has not been possible to identify the house which Clarke believed to be 150 years old. The old workhouse was built by the parish. A facsimile of the workhouse rules, a short history and reproductions of the illustrations Clarke mentions have been published by H.A.D. The originals are WP 4477/1-3.

102. Homerton Castle was no.172 Homerton High Street. Benjamin Driver was still in occupancy in 1871 so it is likely that the house was purchased by the Hospital and demolished in 1873 as a new infirmary was constructed in that year. Homerton Castle was approximately opposite Roding Road.

103. Hackney parish records are divided between H.A.D. and G.L.R.O. 'The Long Memorandum Book' may be G.L.R.O. p.79/JN1/217.

104. The Adam and Eve public house (old building) was no.155 Homerton High Street. It modern successor is nos.153-155.

105. Wick House is marked on the 1831 Hackney Parish map as 'Dr Tuke's Lunatic Asylum'. By 1870 it was known as Sidney House and still retained its own grounds. After development of the grounds the house was left bordering Hassett Road and, altered and extended, was in use as a convent by 1913. The Silk Mills were in at the east end of Cassland Road on the north side near the junction with Wick Road.

106. For White Lion tavern see footnote 76. Clarke refers to Wick Hall on p.163 but describes it as Wick House, confusing it with the Wick House that later became Sidney House. Wick Hall would appear to be the correct name. Clarke's 'rope walk' was part of a rope works which occupied the site of the present St Mary at Eton Church, between Eastway and the North London Line. The footpath was later taken for sidings adjoining the railway, though part of the northern part of its course is in the modern Swinnerton Street. It originally joined Kenworthy Road a little to the north of Chevet Street.

107. Lead Mill River diverged north of the site of the White House and rejoined the Lea at Bully Point at the boundary between the parishes of Hackney and Bow. By 1894 it was known as the Waterworks River. The Robinson references are Vol.1. pp.67-69. See also Clarke p.152.

108. 'Rockholt' is usually known as Ruckholt. For the White House see p.152 and footnote 96.

109. For Wick House/Wick Hall see footnote 106.

110. Mark Beaufoy's scientific experiments also included ballooning, see footnote 64.

111. H.A.D. local collections has prospectuses for Wick Hall Collegiate School for 1841 and 1855, when the owner had added 'and Commercial School' to his establishment, a sign of changing times. The School and the house had gone by 1870. Hackney Wick was an estate rather than a manor with its own courts and records, a 'wick' being an outlying farm. There are maps of the estate in H.A.D. for 1763 (M 3594) and 1809 V28, Woodcock's purchase was 1763 and the sale to Gilby was in 1766, (H.A.D. V 140) not 1796 as Clarke states.

Chapter 18

112. These watercolours drawn looking towards the bend in the road northwards are now H.A.D. WP 4465. Bully Fen ('Bully Fence' on the 1831 Hackney Parish Map) was between the Lea and Lead Mills River. See also p.161.

112a. The White Hart public house was on the south side of Temple Mills Road by the bridge. It has been rebuilt since Clarke's day.

113. On the Hackney Parish Map this portion of what is now Cassland Road was called Hackney Bay. The only evidence for Clarke's suggested derivation of the name is Thomas's statement that the mutineer Adams was a resident of this area.

114. Archives of the Sir John Cass Charity are held at the charity's headquarters. Copies of certain items have been included in H.A.D. collections.

115. The road 'running out of Gascoyne Road' is Meynell Crescent, which was indeed continued into Church Crescent. The French Hospital is now a Catholic School.

116. This is the Rev Henry Handley Norris, whose ancestors had purchased the estate in 1654. The house Clarke describes was built in 1728 and was on the east side of Lauriston Road at the Southborough Road junction. Clarke is confusing Norris house with Grove House, on the site of the present Meynell Gardens.

117. Mrs Todd's School was the former no.36 Lauriston Road. All of the brewery premises have now been demolished. Offer's house and its neighbours were part of the Cass Estate and were south of the present junction of Lauriston Road with Victoria Park Road on the west side, back from the road. They were probably demolished in the early 1860s. The Three Colts tavern was on the site of the corner of Morpeth and Gore Roads. Prior to boundary changes in the later 19th century it was in the parish of Bethnal Green.

118. The stone spire of St John of Jerusalem, South Hackney continued to give trouble and was replaced by the present copper clad one in 1954-55.

119. The Norris Almshouses, formerly no.145 Victoria Park Road have now been demolished and a block of old people's flats, Horris House, stands on the site.

120. The Eagles, Well Street, were on the site of nos.152 a-c Well Street. The gardens of the house are now covered by nos 1-5 Shore Place and Grendon and Kendal Houses.

121. The illustrations of 'Jane Shore's house' are now H.A.D. WP 4465/2 and 3. The Wesleyan Chapel, marked on the Hackney Parish Map of 1831, was on the

east side of Shore Road, south of the later junction with King Edwards Road (this section of the road is now Clermont Road). Built in 1812 it was originally a Baptist Chapel. Its successor in Paragon Road was called Providence Church in 1870 when it was used by Plymouth Bethren. This latter church was probably demolished when the area was cleared for the construction of Valette Street in the early 1890s.

122. Clayton's house stood just to the south of the present junction of Tudor Road and Shore Road. It had been demolished by 1870. The assault Clarke describes probably took place in the 1830s. The path may have been the one tha ran down the line of the present Cecilia Road and then turned off, cut across Amhurst Road and joined the west side of the Down; its surviving portion is now Amhurst Passage.

Chapter 19

123. This is possibly Shore Place house which had been demolished by 1831 and replaced by a row of houses, later nos 4-16 Shore Road. An illustration of the house, which would appear to have been built in the 16th century, is in the H.A.D. visual collection.

124. The wheelwrights, bakers, and oilman and builder occupied nos 4-10 Well Street in premises now demolished.

125. The Hand in Hand and Widows Home Asylums was no.23 Well Street, now part of Shuttleworth's Hotel. The former coach houses of the L.G.O.C. which later became the London Transport Well Street garage are now (1986) owned by the London Borough of Hackney. None of the other houses Clarke described survive; those adjoining St Thomas Place would appear to be mid 19th century (Nos 39-43 Well St). St Andrew's Hall was built on the site of the first South Hackney Church ; its site now forms part of the open space fronting St Thomas Place. The large house on the south side of the road was on the site of nos 44-46 Well Street.

126. It would appear that neither Chambers nor Clarke had access to the parish copy of the 1831 Hackney Census (now P/J/Misc I). From the position of his entry it would appear that Thomas lived in a terrace later numbered nos 22-40 Well Street on the south side of the road between Tudor Grove and Shore Road. It is possible that his house was no.30, though this identification depends on counting unnumbered houses from a known point where the census taker turned turned from one road into another. Thomas' manuscript is now H.A.D. D/F/TYS 70/10 and a typescript copy is available for consultation in the local collection.

127. The 1870 Ordnance Survey map, which marks pumps does not show one in Cottage Place. For the Eagles see also p.175 and footnote 120.

128. Frampton House was on the north side of Well Street, latterly just to the east of Havelock Road. According to the anonymous author of a series of articles that appeared in the Hackney Gazette in 1875 (later collected as 'Our Local Sketches' - see Introduction) Frampton House was divided into two houses in 1840 and made into shops in 1871. A stone over the door dated the house to 1696 and a sketch is included in one edition of Our Local Sketches . The site in now part of the Frampton Park council estate.

129. Frampton Park Nursery was on the west side of Frampton Park Road opposite the present Sherrard House, and in front of Darby House. It was still flourishing in 1913. Captain Clarke was almost certainly a relative of the author.

130. The 1831 Hackney Parish map shows a range of buildings set back from Well Street. It is likely that these were replaced no later than the early 1840s by the roads Clarke describes. Some of the poor housing Clarke complains of had been cleared by 1913, including Cottage Place whose site was taken to build a cinema.

131. Ashby's bakery was still in the family in 1894, the shop being the former no.122 Well Street.

132. For John Thomas' house see footnote 126. The Hackney Theological Seminary

was no 110 Well Street, the site is now part of Orchard Street School. George Collison had come to the seminary from Walthamstow, where he had previously been minister of Marsh Street Congregational Church. His son was later secretary of the Abney Park Cemetery Company. The Goldsmiths' and Jewellers' Almshouses were on the west side of Holcroft Road. The site is now part of Orchard School.

133. Trinity Congregational Chapel was on the corner of Brenthouse Road and Frampton Park Road. The Well Street Chapel and School had been demolished by 1870. The Board School stood between Well Street and Milborne Street fronting Elsdale Street.

134. Robinson's Retreat was on the approximate site of the present nos.41-63 Lennox House. The gardens were between Homerton Terrace and the bend in Retreat Place.

135. The firm published A century and a half of the house of Berger 1760-1910 by Thomas B. Berger in 1910. An unpublished typescript by F.Armitage Lewis Berger and Sons Ltd : a new history c.1968 together with the 1910 history is in H.A.D. local collection. The original house in Shepherd's Lane was on the approximate site of the present no.20, with land to the south.

136. The Woolpack Brewery had become the Lord Nelson by 1872. A description of the accident on the viaduct is included in one of the collections of cuttings in H.A.D. local collection.

Chapter 20

137. The Unitarian Church was the New Gravel Pit Meeting House, formerly between nos. 26 and 28 Chatham Place.

138. The Parochial Schools were originally on the site of no.28 Chatham Place. See The Hackney Free and Parochial Schools: a history by John Baldry (1970 in H.A.D. local collection. The Board School is now Morningside Primary.

139. In 1843 Edward Aguilar lived at the Triangle, Mare Street. In 1847 a Mrs Aguilar was listed as no.1 Clarence Place, Clapton Square Home Influence : a tale for mothers and daughters 29 edition 1874 is in H.A.D. collection, but the author is given as Grace Aguilar, not Sarah, presumably it was written from the Clarence Place house.

140. The former London Orphan Asylum has now been demolished with the exception of the entrance facade, which can still be seen at the end of Linscott Road.

141. Hackney School was noted for plays put on by pupils. Cast lists and other details can be found in H.A.D. D/F/TYS 70/14. One pupil and performer was the Georgian memorialist Robert Creevy. Howard House or Howard Lodge, as it is described in 1872, was the home of James Lovegrove, the district surveyor at that time. Pencil sketches of the house, earlier known as Prospect House, exist prior to the construction of Goulton Road - identifiable by the profile of the shop just visible in the sketch and which can be seen in A Second Look p.27. By 1893 Howard Lodge had been replaced by two villas named Howard House and Howard Villas. H.A.D. P 12084 & P 12015.

142. Priory Works and the Priory were on the site of present nos.137-141 Clapton Road. The Priory is one of the illustrations on the 'Walthamstow Service' at Vestry House Museum, Waltham Forest.

143. The Maitland Place houses, nos 145-153 Lower Clapton Road, were later to form part of the Mothers' Hospital which has just closed (1986). Howard's house at Clapton had gone by 1831. Copies of the views of the house are in H.A.D. visual collection.

144. Lewis Berger ('Borger' in the directory) was in occupation in 1872. The house next door was the Chesnuts, divided into two houses by 1872 and by 1893 called the Chesnuts and Frognal, now the approximate site of nos.161-

171 Lower Clapton Road and Rowhill Road - named after another house in the vicinity.

145. Mrs Revil's house was called Bruce Lodge, just to the south of the junction opposite Atherden Road. The Deaf and the Dumb Asylum just to the north of Bruce Lodge is now the southern part of the new Powell House development. A manuscript note in Our Local Sketches op.cit. is less delicate than Clarke - Turner's house was known locally as Pisspot Hall.

146. There is a fine album of photographs of the Gaviller house, greenhouse and garden in H.A.D. visual collection. Some of these are autochromes, an early colour process first made commercially available in 1907, and constitute the first colour photographic views of any Hackney subject. Mrs Slater's school may be a cluster of buildings marked on the 1831 Hackney Parish Map; it appears to have gone by 1870.

147. The adjoining house was on the site of nos.130-132 Lower Clapton Road. Cromwell House Lodge stood where Atherden Road now joins Lower Clapton Road. Ivy Lodge and The Lodge were on the site of nos.136-142 Lower Clapton Road. The wheelwright's was on the approximate site of nos.154-156 Lower Clapton Road.

148. For a discussion of André's house see p.76 and footnote 45. Tower House has yet to be traced, the name occurs in no directory between 1872-94. The lady's school was in Pond House, although the nearby no.158 was also a private school by 1892.

149. For Bishop Wood see p.92-93. The Almshouses are still (1986) in use after being restored in 1930.

150. Clapton House stood between Thistlewaite Road and the Lea Bridge roundabout. Its grounds ran back to the line of Cornthwaite Road. It was used as a school in the 1840s.

151. Lea Bridge Road was constructed on its present alignment under the provisions of the Lea Bridge Turnpike Act 1757, so construction would have been completed later than Clarke's estimated date. The fence he describes ran from the corner of Lea Bridge and Cornthwaite Roads on the line of the present Leagrave Street, which was still in the use as a lane in 1831.

152. Illustrations of the tollgate are in H.A.D. visual collection. One is reproduced in 'The Lea Bridge Turnpike and the Wraggs Stage coaches', by W.G.S. Tonkin, Walthamstow Antiquarian Society, 1974. Huth's house would have fronted onto Lower Clapton Road.

153. The chapel, a Wesleyan Methodist church, was on the site of no.193-197 Lower Clapton Road.

Chapter 21

154. The land behind Maitland Place later became part of the Mothers' Hospital. The spring, marked as 'Ancient Spring' on the 1831 Hackney Parish map, stood near the junction of Amhurst Passage and the path running parallel with the railway. It was still there in 1868 but probably dried up after the building of the railway.

155. There is a slide of the watercolour Clarke mentions in H.A.D. visual collection (S.623).

156. The Hackney Church of England School was on the approximate site of Clarence Gardens, Clarence Road. See also pp 132,134.

157. It has not been possible to trace this battle of Clapton any further than Thomas. It would appear to be a fabrication.

158. For discussion on André's house see footnote 45.

159. Warwick House was occupied by Isaac Bristow Baron, a vet, in 1893 and had a forge alongside. The house on the site of Prout Road seems to have been a shop in 1872 rather than the private residence Clarke suggests. The tramyard was on the site of nos. 38-40 Upper Clapton Road.

160. Brooke House and the outbuildings are now the site of Brooke House School. It was badly demolished in the Second World war and the remains were later demolished. Vol XXVIII of The Survey of London (1960) deals with the house and its history. From Clarke's date, it would appear that the Munroe family took over the house in 1780. There are engravings, watercolours and photographs of the house in H.A.D. visual collection.

161. Lord Monteagle's house was on the west side of Pitfield Street at the junction with Hyde Road. It is identified in the Survey of London Vol.VIII. The Parish of St Leonard, Shoreditch, p.79.

162. The three small houses converted into shops were on the site of nos.25-35 Upper Clapton Road. Slark's house was no.37. Clarke himself lived at no.1 Arbutus Place from 1863-1898 (see Introduction). The Ferns was on the corner of Upper Clapton Road and the present Northwold Road.

163. For the tramyard see footnote 159. Lee Place was on the site of Beaumont Court and the gardens ran down the whole of the south side of Cleveleys Road.

164. Snewins was no.3 Railway Terrace, later no.64 Upper Clapton Road. The Mount was on the east side of Upper Clapton Road just to the south of the junction with Northwold Road. Messrs Rotherham and Hancock lived at nos. 1 and 2 Anlarby house respectively, whose site is almost opposite the junction of Upper Clapton and Evering Roads.

165. The house adjoining The Mount appears as Mountpleasant House on the 1868 Ordnanace Survey map. Isaac Hensley is recorded in the 1811 Census and had left the area by 1834. Hanbury has not been traced.

166. The house midway between Springfield and Spring Hill is Springfield House and was occupied by Thomas Bros between 1872 and 1893. It is now White Lodge, Springfield Park. Belle Vue Terrace and Place were on the west side of Upper Clapton Road to the south of the present Rossington Street on the approximate site of nos.93-107 Clapton Road.

167. Lows Nursery was on the approximate site of the present no.150 Upper Clapton Road and its grounds included part of Knightland Road, Muston Road and Sach Road. The site of the Elm Villas is now Woolmer House. The Warwick Avenue reference is confusing as Clarke appears to be referring to the northern portion of Mount Pleasant Lane. Wren's Park is so marked on the 1831 Hackney Parish Map and the house he refers to called Mount Pleasant (distinct from Mountpleasant House for which see footnote 165) stood on the line of the present Leaside Road. The dye works were at the bottom of Bakers Hill on the south east side.

168. In 1872 a Mrs Vansomer lived at no.1 Royal Terrace and one G.Wohlgerth was resident at Surrey House on Upper Clapton Road at the same period. It is possible that one of these was Clarke's patient.

169. Buccleuch Terrace was demolished for the construction of the present Buccleuch House. Behind the gardens of the Terrace were Buccleuch Cottages whose site lay approximately between Overlea Road and the service road behind Ashstead Road. Verdon's Boat Houses were on the north side at the river end of Spring Hill.

170. Stainforth House in no.96 Clapton Common, Craven's house, Craven Lodge, stood at the southern edge of the playing field behind nos.130-138 Clapton Common. It was demolished shortly after Clarke wrote Glimpses . The Leg of Mutton Pond lay between Egerton Road, Stamford Hill and the end of Clapton Common (road) and appears on the 1831 Hackney Parish map.

171. The Bird Cage Tavern is now no.58 Stamford Hill.

172. Gothic Hall was formerly no.120 Stamford Hill. On its site are Berwyn House, Arran House, Brecon House and part of the Sidlaw House.

Chapter 23

173. South Hornsey had its own local board and remained an independant local

authority until merged with new Stoke Newington Metropolitan Borough in 1900. The detached section Clarke refers to included the west side of Stoke Newington High Street/Road from opposite the junction with Tyssen Road to opposite that with Farleigh Road and with a western boundary running along Nevill Road including St Matthias Church, meeting Matthias Road just to the west of no.18 in that street. There were also two other detached portions.

174. Stoke Newington Dispensary was at no.189 Stoke Newington High Street until it closed in 1948. Records are H.A.D D/S/28. The Invalid Asylum was next door at no.187, and the building is still 1986 extant. Shirley Hibberd was the editor of a gardening journal. Several of his publications are in H.A.D. local collection.

175. It has not been possible to confirm the precise site of the chapel in Northwold Road. It may have been that used by Plymouth Brethren on the south side near the junction with Narford Road. West Hackney Church was badly bombed in the Second World War and has been replaced by a new church.

176. Clarke's account of the founding of the Palatine Houses is a little confused. While there may have been a later influx of refugees from the Napoleonic Wars, the Palatine House were built after 1710 following a decision by the parish to house four refugee families who had fled from the French campaigns in the Rhine in the War of the Spanish Succession.

177. The supposed royal residence on Newington Green was on the north west corner.

178. Balmes House stood on the line of De Beauvoir Road, about half way between the canal bridge and Downham Road. It was used as a lunatic asylum after Whitmore's death, passing into the hands of the notorious Warburton. It was retained in the initial layout of De Beauvoir Town but was demolished shortly after 1851. Illustrations of the house are in H.A.D visual collection. Clarke's attitude to De Beauvoir Town, commensurate with contemporary views of 1930s surburban development, also seems to have been shared by photographers, as almost no nineteenth century views survive.

179. It has not been possible to locate Acton Crescent - Clarke may have been confused it with Kingland Crescent on the east side of Kingsland Road near Dalston Junction. For the other names see the street list.

Chapter 24

180. St Bartholomew's Chapel fronted on to the corner of Balls Pond Road and Kingsland Road. There are illustrations in H.A.D. visual collection. It last appears on the 1831 Hackney Parish Map and was demolished in 1845.

181. The history Clarke mentions is Lambert's History and Survey of London and its environs - however his quotation comes from Walford Old and New London Vol.5 p.529.

182. The Swiss chalet is marked on the 1831 map but had gone by the time of the Ordnance Survey in 1870. St Philip's Church was on the north east corner of Richmond and Parkholme Roads. The 'retired mansion' may have been the former Lamb's Farm on whose land this district was built.

183. 'Old Church Path', Clarke is following the approximate line of modern Wilton Way, a path marked as Willow Walk on the 1831 Hackney Parish Map. Graham Road was laid out in the later 1870s and Grove Place was on the approximate line of Sylvester Road. For 'Glass Coaches' see also p.16. The gardener's ground may have been the small area of land now the site of Boscobel House.

184. The Tyssen Arms, later no.29 Dalston Lane. The Three Compasses was later no.99 Dalston Lane.

185. The Manor House later became part of the Refuge for Destitute Females whose site now forms part of the Samuel Lewis Trust Dwellings. The Red Cow was

on the corner of Wayland Avenue and the later Sigdon Road. Graham House is the present no.113 Dalston Lane.

186. Lower Clapton Congregational Church was on the north side of Amhurst Road at the junction with Pembury Road. Downs Court now occupies the site.

187. Nos.152-154 Dalston Lane as described by Clarke were later demolished.

188. Rainbow Terrace was a very unofficial name and Clarke's story is the only known reference to it.

189. Eyre and Spottiswood's printing works were at the top end of St Mark's Road at the east corner of Shacklewell Lane.

190. Shacklewell House was on the north side of the Green behind the late Manor House for whish see p.250. The site of Shacklewell House is between Perch, April and Seal Streets.

191. The Manor House was on the site of the present nos.91-105 Shacklewell Lane. Milton House was on the site of the present Milton House Mansions.

192. 'Amhurst Road ... between Anton Street and Evering Road'. Presumably Clarke means Amhurst Road north of Anton Street, as Evering Road has no junction with Amhurst Road. Amhurst Terrace may have been the row of houses on the site of nos.317-347 Amhurst Road.

Chapter 25

193. The Tile Kilns were near Hermitage Road. For South Hornsey see footnote 173.

194. On the matter of the name origin of the parish the prefix 'Stoke' may refer either to tree stumps suggesting woodland clearance or to a timber structure. (VCH Inner Middlesex Vol VIII p.143). Crosby Hall was moved from Bishopsgate to Mores Gardens, Danvers Street, Chelsea in 1908.

195. For the Palatine Estate see J.R.Spratling's History of the Palatine Estate and Charity n.d.

196. The G.E.R. extensions were constructed in 1872.

197. The Summer House adjoined Fleetwood House. Summerhouse Road was later built on the site. For a history of Fleetwood House see The Chronicles of Fleetwood House by A.J.Shirren (1951), copy in H.A.D. local collection. Gant's house may have been Compton House whose approximate site is the junction of Lancell Street and Stoke Newington Church Street. Clarke would have known Gant though the Kings Own Tower Hamlets Militia, in which he served as depot surgeon. The large house opposite Fleetwood House is on the site of the junction of Kersley Road and Stoke Newington Church Street.

198. Abney Park Congregational Chapel was between nos.73 and 75 Stoke Newington Church Street.

199. The stables etc. of the G.O.C. are now a London Borough of Hackney depot.

200. Various works by Watts are in the local collection. A set of cork shapes used by Watts as teaching aids in geometry are part of the Hackney Museum collection.

201. Records of the Abney Park Cemetery are held by H.A.D. For a history of the cemetery see A Guide to Abney Park Cemetery by Paul Joyce (1984), in H.A.D. local collection.

202. The Quaker Meeting House stood opposite nos.24-40 Yoakley Road. St Mary's Mission Rooms were nos.106-108 Stoke Newington Church Street. The Amethyst Club occupied no.110 and the vestry offices no.126. Barn Street has now been cut short it formerly passed through to the present Lordship Terrace. The Manor House stood on the north side of Stoke Newington Church Street facing the junction with Albion Road.

203. For Thomas Sutton see also p.137.

Chapter 26

204. The Assembly Rooms were on the site of the later St Mary's Church Rooms in Defoe Road.

205. The Falcon public house was no.151 Stoke Newington Church Street. The narrow alley ran to the west of it and the houses Clarke describes were on the site of no.16-40 Woodlea Road. The house used for manor courts was on part of the site now occupied by Stoke Newington Library. 'The Rev Dr Barnsby's was Poe's alteration of the name of his school master, who in reality was the Rev.John Bransby, the lecturer at the parish church 1814-25. He leased a house on the north side of Stoke Newington Church from 1806. By 1815 this was known as Manor House Boarding School. Poe's description of 'Barnsby's school was in William Wilson bears little resemblance to the Stoke Newington School which continued under Barnsby until it was demolished in 1880. See VCH Inner Middlesex pp.221-222.

206. The Old Rose and Crown was on the east side of the Albion Road junction with Stoke Newington Church Street.

207. The house between Albion Road and St Mary's Church was divided by 1868, when part was known as North House. This would suggest that the fire surmised by Clarke took place later than 1870. The site is now occupied by the present Rose and Crown public house and nos.201-205 Stoke Newington Church Street.

Appendices

208. Branscombe and Son occupied nos.331 to 337 Mare Street. The firm were Green and Slattevie (sic) in 1831, William Green 1843-1849, Green and Co. in 1851 and Green Branscombe from 1867. The business was taken over by Matthew Rose and is now the site of the present Woolworths.

STREET NAME CONCORDANCE

Former Street Name	Present Name or Location
Acton Street, Kingsland Road	Arbutus Street
Arbutus Place	On west side of Upper Clapton Road north of Ickburgh Road junction. N°1 was Clarke's own house. See Introduction.
Baxters Court	Site on west side of Mare Street under the present Barclays Bank.
Birdcage Walk	Columbia Road (portion from Hackney Road to Baxendale Street).
Bridge Street	Ponsford Street
Bull Alley, Stoke Newington	Clevedon Passage
Castle Street, West Hackney	Crossway
Church Path (running from London Fields to Reading Lane)	Martello Street (part) and Hackney Grove
Church Road, Homerton	Barnabas Road
Church Road,	Homerton
Church Road, West Hackney	Manse Road
Church Row, Stoke Newington	Site of the Stoke Newington Town Hall & the Stoke Newington Libray.
Church Street, Hackney	Mare Street (roughly from Reading Lane to Lower Clapton Road).

Cock & Castle Lane, West Hackney	Crossway
Cock Hanger Green	Stoke Newington Common
College Lane	Ran from Homerton Grove to High Street, Homerton (almost opposite Digby Road). Now part of the Bannister House Estate.
Cottage Place, Well Street	Site was on north side of Well Street. Later the site of a cinema, now part of Petiver Close.
Cross Street	That part of Homerton Row from Churchill Walk to junction with Homerton Grove.
Dalston Corner	Junction of Mare Street & Dalston Lane.
Dalston Rise	Terrace on north side of Dalston Lane approximately between Wayland Avenue & Amhurst Road.
Devonshire Road	Brenthouse Road
Dog Row	Southern part of Cambridge Heath Road.
Dows Lane	Northwold Road
Eaton Place, South Hackney	Well Street to Frampton Park Road.
Five Houses	On east side of Lower Clapton Road from Urswick Road junction to junction with Powerscroft Road.
Gainsborough Road	Eastway
Gascoigne Road	Gascoyne Road
Gordon Road, West Hackney	Beatty Road
The Grove, Homerton	Homerton Grove
Grove Street, South Hackney	Church Crescent & Lauriston Road from south of St John at Jerusalem Church to junction of Grove Road with Old Ford Road.
Grove Street Lane, South Hackney	Victoria Park Road east of junction with Lauriston Road & Grove Road.
Hackney Grove (between Reading Lane & Sylvester Road)	Part now site of present Hackney Town Hall, remainder Sylvester Path.
Hackney Terrace	Now 20-54 Cassland Road
Jerusalem Court, Jerusalem Gardens	Site of Valette Street & the former GLC estate.
Keate's Lane	Northwold Road
King Edwards Road	Road altered by development of Kingshold Estate. Eastern end now Moulins Road. Portion from junction with Ainsworth Road to beginning of new Moulins Road now under Kingshold Estate.

Lansdown Place	Formerly house on north side of Shrubland Road junction : site of 1-46 Fields Estate.
Loddiges Terrace	West side of Mare Street between Darnley & Paragon Road.
London Place	London Fields East Side
London Terrace	London Fields West Side
Margaret Street	Whiston Street
Martha Street, Cambridge Heath Road	Wadeson Street
Milton Road, Stoke Newington	Milton Grove
Newmarket Terrace, Cambridge Heath Road	East side of road between Wadeson Road and Bishops Way.
Norfolk Road, Dalston	Cecilia Road
Northifield Road, Clapton	Mistake in text for Northwold Road (p.217).
Old Church Path, Hackney	On approximate line of modern Wilton Way. See p.241.
Orchard Place, Clarence Road	Hindrey Place
Orchard Place, South Hackney	Actually Orchard Street and now Milborne Street.
Palace Road	Site ran from Well Street on line of present Forsyth House on Frampton Park Estate.
Paradise Fields	Chatham Place
Paradise Row, Stoke Newington	Houses on south side of Stoke Newington Church Street between Church Walk & Clissold Road (with Park Crescent).
Park Crescent, Stoke Newington	Houses on south side of Stoke Newington Church Street between Church Walk & Clissold Walk (with Paradise Row).
Park Street, Stoke Newington	Yoakley Road
Percy Road	Renamed Kingshold Road. Site now included in Kingshold Estate.
Plough Lane	Furrow Lane
Pond Lane	Millfields Road
Portland Place	Site now 6-28 Lower Clapton Road
Priory Place	Site now under Petiver Close & Fairchild House.
Queens Road, Hackney	Queensbridge Road

Rainbow Terrace	See footnote 188
Rainault Forest	Should be Hainault Forest
Richmond Terrace	Between Darnley & Paragon Roads
St John's Place	Site now under Petiver Close and Fairchild House.
St John Street	From Homerton Row to just west of junction with Shepherd's Lane. Site now part of Banister House Estate.
Saxony Cottages	Site was to north of and parallel with Pemburton Place, now under Cordwainer's College extension.
Shore Place (from Mare Street to Shoe Road)	Tudor Road
Shore Road (south of King Edward Road)	Part removed, remainder now Clermont Road.
Shoreditch Place	Site now nos.9-18 Shore Road
Sidney Road	Kenworthy Road
Silk Mill Row	East end of Cassland Road
Stockmar Road	Ran from Morning Lane to junction of Paragon Road & Frampton Park Road. Now part of a housing estate.
Stoke Newington Road	Newington Road
Tower Street	Martello Street
Tryons Court	Site on north side of Tudor Road approximately at rear of gap between Nos.15&23.
Tryons Place	Tudor Road (west end to the junction with Tudor Grove)
Victoria Grove, Stoke Newington	Victorian Grove
Virginia Row	Columbia Road (portion from Shoreditch High Stree to junction with Gosset Street).
Warwick Avenue, Clapton	See note on p.219
Warwick Road, Clapton	Warwick Grove
Water Gruel Row	Houses at south end (east side) of present Shore Road, opposite junction with Tudor Road.
Water Lane	Morning Lane from Ponsford Street junction to Well Street.
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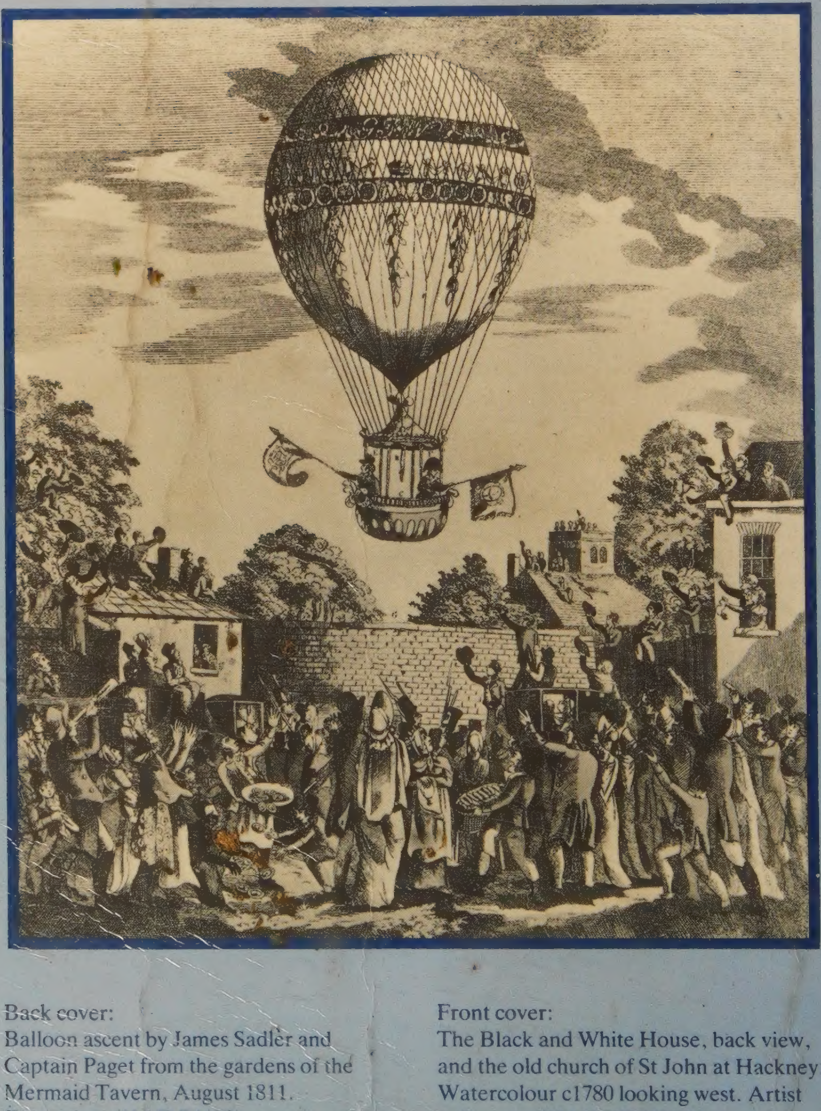
Writing in the 1890s, Benjamin Clarke, a local doctor, recalled the Hackney of his childhood. So popular did his articles in one of the local papers prove that they were published in book form in 1894. With its mixture of local history and Clarke's own vivid memories of the area, the work has remained essential reading for anyone interested in the Hackney that preceded the Victorian developers. This new edition has a short biography of the author and notes to enable the modern reader to step back with Clarke to the time when Hackney and Stoke Newington were villages on the edge of London.



Back cover:
Balloon ascent by James Sadler and Captain Paget from the gardens of the Mermaid Tavern, August 1811. Engraving. (HAD P4488)

Front cover:
The Black and White House, back view, and the old church of St John at Hackney. Watercolour c1780 looking west. Artist unknown. (HAD WP4439/1)

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